DELORAINE.

VOL. III.

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BY

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Why that bosom gored?
Why dimly gleams the visionary sword?

POPE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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CHAPTER I.

HAVING made the necessary arrangements with my solicitor, and received the latest intelligence from my steward, and my beloved daughter having insisted upon being my companion in exile, and obtained my half-reluctant, half-joyful consent, I suffered no delay to interpose that might increase the difficulty and danger of the voyage upon which I had resolved. I had employed a portion of my time during the last two days in enquiring out a

vessel by which we might most speedily pass over to Holland, and had fortunately met with one that was to sail early on the morning of the day after that in which Catherine had conclusively joined me, on board which we could be immediately accommodated.

I was very far at that time from being fully aware of all the dangers that beset me. I believed I had slain a man, friendless and obscure, just arrived from a three years' exile and wandering in various parts of the globe, without connections in England, or any one that would feel a more than ordinary anxiety to avenge his death,—though assuredly none of those considerations had had the smallest weight with me at the moment that I perpetrated his destruction.

I had slain, as I believed, the friendless; and, lo! full soon, though not immediately, I found, that I had conjured up an enemy, the most deadly, with intellect and wit to conduct

his purpose, and means abundantly to feed his undertaking,—a man, that promised never to relax in his design, and the tide of whose passion was unlikely at any time to "feel retiring ebb."

But, before I was aware of this circumstance, I was at no loss for arguments to convince me of the perilous situation in which I stood. I knew the unconquerable horror with which man in society contemplates him who wilfully sheds the blood of his fellow. The turf under the wall of my own domain was widely stained with human gore; I had left behind me the body of one pierced with a deadly wound; he was weaponless; the eyes of several bore witness that I had been his destroyer. I knew therefore that in the course of things I should be sought for; I had abundant reasons forbidding me to stand the ordeal of a public trial; I was indifferent in my choice as to what region of the many-peopled earth I should fix on for

my future abode; I had but one tie that was left me, uniting me with my species, my exemplary and admirable daughter. I believed, as I have said, that there would be some pursuit set on foot against me, that a warrant would scarcely fail to be issued for the apprehension of my person. But I conceived, that the search that should be made for me would be temporary, that the noise occasioned by the act I had committed would soon blow over, that I and my crime would to a great degree perish from the memories of men, and that, if I could escape from the first ardour of enquiry, I might afterwards safely sit down in obscurity in some foreign land. I had gained a main step, if I succeeded to transport myself to some province or kingdom on the continent of Europe.

It was with a deep feeling of sadness and awe that I embarked, and that I conducted my daughter, on board the vessel which was to sever us from our native country. I had been

by birth one of the privileged members of the commonwealth of England, a man succeeding to an ample landed estate, which descended to me from a long line of ancestors, which classed me among the prime gentry of my country, ranked me as the associate, and I may say the equal of its nobles, and surrounded me with a body of tenantry, who looked up to me with mingled honour and affection, as to their patron and protector, the individual who was to watch for their safety, to assist them in their emergencies with indulgence and counsel, to overlook their errors, and in certain prescribed and important cases to command their services. Of all these advantages I now saw myself stripped. It is true that, as long as I retained my personal liberty, I should perhaps be able to draw the pecuniary produce of my estate, and spend it at the bidding of my discretion in foreign climates. This was surely but a narrow and formal part, the mere husk, of the advantages

to which I was born; and all the rest was gone. My only child, my daughter, was destined to succeed me in this, and, if she married, would by such union convey it to her husband; but she, with unheard-of generosity and self-devotion, had, for a long and indeterminate period at least, surrendered these benefits, and made herself the partner of my pilgrimage and my dishonour.

We descended the Tower Stairs, and placed ourselves in a wherry, that was to convey us on board the slight vessel with the master of which I had agreed for our passage. We went alone; for it was essential in my circumstances to cut off, as completely as I could, any thing that should connect me with those with whom I formerly had intercourse, or afford a clue to discover my intended concealment. The morning was clouded and gloomy, and sufficiently responsive to the tone of my mind.

The vessel contained eight or ten passengers,

beside ourselves, the captain, the steward, and four common sailors. I was no sooner on board, than I cast a stealthy glance round on my fellow-passengers, and then crept into a corner, and concealed myself as much as possible from observation. I could not perceive that the ship contained one human creature that I had ever seen before; and I congratulated myself accordingly. We passed Greenwich, Gravesend and the Nore. At Gravesend we took in one additional passenger.

Among the persons on board I early observed one who eyed me intently. It was my cue to pay as little attention as possible to those with whom I sailed. I however watched my opportunity to steal a glance at him unperceived; but I by no means recognised any features with which I had been previously acquainted. The man was clad in garments that appeared to have seen considerable service; and, though

of a common and ordinary figure, he had something of the air of a decayed gentleman. By and by he walked up to the part of the ship where I had placed myself, and looked over the side of the vessel, as if watching the rippling of the waves. I did not like the nearness of the position he had chosen, and was preparing to change my retreat for one that should free me from this annoyance. He suddenly addressed me.

I beg your pardon, said he. I have been trying to recollect where I had formerly the pleasure of seeing you. If I am not mistaken, your name is Deloraine; and I had once occasion to apply to you at the court of the elector of Saxony, where you were the resident. My name is Stevenson; I was engaged in a commercial affair in which I had need of the representative of the king of England to see that I obtained my just rights; and I have

ever felt that I was greatly indebted to you for the promptness and firmness of your interference.

I recollect, replied I, something of the matter; but I did not call to mind your person. In the case you mention I did nothing but my duty, and should have done the same for any British subject.

I do not wonder, he rejoined, at your not recollecting me. I am but an ordinary man; and misfortunes since have greatly altered my appearance. But you, sir, are of another order of persons; and there is something in your cast of countenance, which, when once observed, can scarcely afterwards pass from the mind.

I answered, carelessly as might be thought, but with a deep, though suppressed sigh, It may be so.

You then, replied the stranger, appeared with splendour and a considerable train, as became your appointment. I hope, added he,

looking round, and observing to himself that I did not seem to have a single attendant, I hope you have not, like me, been unfortunate.

I shrunk from the impertinence of my companion, and answered with haughtiness, I can scarcely pretend to the honour of your acquaintance.

All this was but "bald, unjointed chat;" yet on many accounts it affected me deeply. It was extremely mortifying to me that I should be thus recognised, after a lapse of years, by a man who had seen me only once. The idle remark of so vulgar a person, that there was something in my cast of countenance, which, when once observed, could scarcely afterwards pass from the mind, was peculiarly distressing to me. I had wished to withdraw myself, without leaving a clue to discover in what quarter I had disposed of my person. In going abroad, I had desired that it should rather be supposed that I was hidden in some

obscure part of the metropolis, or in some deep and impenetrable rural retreat in my own country. It was my interest to throw the persons, who I had no doubt would be employed in searching for me, on a false scent. And here, at the first step, I encountered an individual, who recollected my person, called me by my name, and knew that I had withdrawn myself from England and crossed the sea between Harwich and Holland. My secret in this regard was in the keeping of one who had no inducement to respect it. He did not at present know that I was escaping from the retribution of a crime I had committed. But how long would he remain in ignorance of this particular? It was in the ordinary course of things that a reward would be published for my apprehension. This man was as likely as any one else to hear the intelligence, and might be tempted to seek the proffered advantage. If not, the proposal of such a reward

would not fail to make my situation and my crime a subject of conversation; and what reason had I to expect that the man would treat me with any extraordinary forbearance? Every one is delighted with the possession of a secret; and mere vanity would prompt him to tell what he could, or at least to indulge in "ambiguous givings out," and to say, "Well, I know what I know; and if I list to speak"—

The adventure which thus occurred was of evil augury, and led me to reflect perseveringly on the means I might be able to employ on any critical emergency, to conceal my identity with my former self. Man, in the strictest sense, is nothing but a principle of thought, which no material force can arrest or imprison, which bids defiance to all limits of space and time, and speeds its course in a single instant "from Indus to the Pole." I had always reflected with scorn upon the power of other men to control and enslave me. Yet, by

means of this vile incumbrance of our mortal body, we may be brought down from our loftiest flights, subjected to every kind of indignity and disgrace, laid open to the observation of the senses of other men, and exposed to their pursuit and their tyranny.

It appeared to me, that there are four circumstances principally, by which the person of any man may be identified, features, figure, carriage and voice; to which may be added as inferior particulars, the colour of the skin and complexion, and the characteristics by which the hair of one man differs from the hair of another. These circumstances, sometimes one more prominently, and sometimes another, have the effect in perhaps all cases, that a diligent observer may recognise and select the man whom he has had due opportunity to observe, among all the millions of his fellow-men. The man therefore who can counterfeit and disguise these sufficiently, though he cannot

put off the vestments of flesh, may yet escape from the resentment and ill will which may be harboured against him. He may go forward unblenched, and, like Æneas in the streets of Carthage, may pass through the midst of the people, and pursue his way. I did not therefore despair that I might yet insure my safety. I had read the histories of men who, by a careful attention to these considerations, had succeeded to elude the bitterest persecution. I had often had occasion to observe in myself a flexibility of organs, of the lines of the countenance, and of limbs, that promised to do wonders for me in this respect. And I resolved, having already committed the precipitate act, which cut me off from the society of my fellow-creatures, and exposed me to their malice, and that act being irretrievable, that I would not play booty in my own cause, but would carry on the contest to the furthest extremity.

CHAPTER II.

It is time that my narrative should revert to Travers. He, as I have said, had formed an unalterable resolution, that he would sacrifice all other thoughts to the purpose of vengeance against me, and that the grave of him whom he deemed the worthiest, the most excellent, and the most injured of men, should "have a living monument." But he was thoroughly aware that mere determination, without deep contrivance, and the accumulation of adequate means, was nothing. He had succeeded thus far by his exertions, that a coroner's inquest should pronounce a verdict of wilful murder against me, that a warrant should be issued

for my apprehension, and that a duplicate of this warrant should be placed in his hands. The warrant was of course consigned by the coroner to the proper officers for the purpose of its being executed. These officers used the customary diligence, and, after the lapse of a few days, returned an answer to their superior that I was not to be found in the county.

And here, but for the intervention of Travers, the question would perhaps have rested. The coroner indeed transmitted a memorandum of the business to the principal police-office of the metropolis; and a proclamation containing my name, a description of my person, and an account of the crime with which I was charged, was issued in the established forms. But Travers immediately set out for London; and, through his instigation, a fresh proclamation was ordered by the secretary of state, with a reward of five hundred pounds to the person or persons who should produce me in custody.

Even this did not satisfy him. It was not enough, that he should excite the cupidity or sharpen the sagaciousness of others. He resolved not to trust to accident, or to spare any thing of his own diligence: he determined to be himself the soul of every exertion that should be made to bring me to justice. I might be concealed in England; I might have found means to pass over to the continent. Meanwhile he foresaw a difficulty by which he would immediately be met in the search he proposed to engage in, he being entirely unacquainted with my person.

Fortune, without any effort on his part, supplied to him this deficiency. My paternal mansion, as I have said, in consequence of my disappearance was presently shut up, and my establishment dismissed. Before that proceeding was completed, my servants of course anticipated that such a measure would be adopted. I had ever proved myself an indulgent and

liberal master; and therefore the feeling of the majority of my domestics was that of pity for my disaster, and a sincere wish that I might escape the troublesome, if not tragical, consequences to which my precipitation had laid me open.

There was one however in the list of my domestics, whose sentiments materially differed from those entertained by the rest. At the period of my marriage, Margaret had brought with her a servant, by name Ambrose, who had previously attended upon her for a considerable portion of time. He had waited on her at Harrowgate, at the time I first became acquainted with her. He had been on terms of the most unreserved communication with the maid who had been in her employment for years before; and from this maid he learned the original cause of his mistress's ill state of health, and the history of the unfortunate William. Among various speculations that

had occurred between these two servants, Ambrose had started the notion, that they had no absolute demonstration, no complete proof, that William was dead; though the shipwreck which had passed under the eyes of the family, combined with the circumstance that nothing had been heard of him for years after, reduced it almost to a certainty. This talk never went farther than between the two servants. The maid was not disposed to entertain the same scepticism on the subject, as the man. And they both of them agreed, that it would be highly improper to suffer a whisper of this unlicensed talk to reach the ears of their superiors.

Ambrose however, who was of an uncommonly delicate turn of mind for his class in society, had always regarded with invincible repugnance the idea of his mistress's marriage with another, and had therefore constantly viewed me during the period of my courtship

with sentiments of disapprobation, if not of aversion. If William were really dead, as in all likelihood he was, yet Ambrose thought it a sort of profanation that Margaret should unite herself in wedlock with any one else. He called to mind every thing that he had heard of her history. Her first love had been William, the companion of her childish years. They had opened their hearts to each other; their affections had been undivided; and she had owed many and important obligations to the friend of her youth. Her heart had never swerved from him; she had been overpersuaded by her parents to consent to a union with the son of lord Borradale; and now it was by the suggestion of others, and not the prompting of her own mind, that she had become my wife.

It is a part of the great process of human events, that we grow reconciled, and our minds gradually accommodate themselves, to whatever is irrevocable. Though the marriage of his

mistress had by no means been approved by Ambrose in the first instance, yet time gradually undermined his repugnance. Our establishment was creditable and splendid; we were visited by all our opulent neighbours; and no one uttered a whisper to our disadvantage. We lived in apparent order and harmony; Margaret proved to me the model of a tender and affectionate wife; and Ambrose by degrees became a loyal member of our establishment, contemplating me, scarcely less than his mistress, with sentiments of true adherence and willing subjection.

The speculations however that had previously revolved in his mind, and the tardy and gradual way in which he had reconciled himself to the existing state of things, prepared him to regard the horrible catastrophe that occurred, with very different feelings from those of the other spectators. The commencing loyalty that he had felt for my service disappeared in a moment.

The toleration with which he had considered me was only founded on my commendable demeanour towards his mistress, and the unvarying attention she had always manifested for my welfare and peace. Margaret was to this young man the being in all the world that he honoured most. He felt towards her all the deference and devotion of a lover, without approaching in any degree to the ideas which grow out of equality. In his own person and thoughts he imaged out her sentiments. She was his model of perfection; and he copied her as nearly as possible, in all that she expressed, and all that she did. She for ever studied for my happiness, and sedulously employed herself in discharging the offices of an exemplary wife. He therefore, in proportion to his station, imitated her in this; treated me as the head of the establishment, because she so treated me; and exercised a genuine zeal in performing my commands, because such was the rule of her conduct.

But my last act reversed his whole system of thinking in a moment. He discovered in that fatal scene, as if by an instantaneous ray of divine inspiration, who was the unfortunate person, whom I had laid at my feet; he recollected at once all William's misfortunes, and the cruel destiny that unremittingly pursued him. Ambrose observed, with the closest attention, and with the deepest horror, the effect that this catastrophe had produced upon his mistress. He refused to distinguish at whose breast I had presented my pistol, and in whose heart I had lodged the fatal bullet. He pronounced me, directly, without intervention and qualification, the murderer of his mistress. From that instant he became transported out of himself. He was wrapt up in thought and the contemplation of a thousand purposes. He had the gestures and demeanour of a maniac. Of this I had indeed scarcely obtained a glimpse. From the instant that I had

perpetrated the destruction of William, my thoughts were necessarily turned to the withdrawing myself as speedily as might be, from the scene of my precipitate deed. But the attention of the rest of the servants was drawn in a considerable degree to Ambrose's singular demonstrations and behaviour. He however spoke little, and shewed no signs of any determined system of action.

Meanwhile, when Travers made his appearance, and still more as the coroner's inquest proceeded, the situation of Ambrose became essentially changed. He appeared however little more than a silent, but a deeply anxious spectator, during the transaction. Towards the close, and as Travers was engaged in soliciting a duplicate of the warrant for my apprehension, and in expressing his resolution that the warrant should be executed in its strictest letter, and that he would, if necessary, pass to foreign countries in pursuit of me, Ambrose drew near

to the stranger. When Travers had obtained all that he desired from the coroner, and was on the point of quitting the house, this young man requested that he would favour him with a private hearing of a few moments, before he departed.

Having obtained this, he poured out his whole soul to the stranger, and said, that he perceived they were both engaged, though from different incitements, and with unequal means of gratifying their wishes, in the pursuit of the same object. His attachment, the attachment of a servant, but not on that account the less fervent and unalterable, was to the unhappy lady who lay dead in the chamber above stairs; that of Travers to the unfortunate youth whose body was for the present deposited within the walls of the summer-house. He had for years been a faithful servant to his lady, both before her marriage and since, and should esteem his strength and his life gloriously spent in accom-

plishing vengeance against her destroyer. He could imagine no act, so inhuman, so atrocious, and of such complicated barbarity, as that by which I had destroyed in a single moment these constant, most innocent, and most unhappy lovers. We are then, proceeded Ambrose, you and I, engaged in one and the same pursuit. I intreat you to pardon me, for thus presuming to couple myself with a person of your figure and appearance. But I feel a no less fervent passion than you do, for accomplishing our common object, the bringing this criminal to justice. And my mind whispers that I can be of use to you. You have never beheld the person whose punishment you eagerly desire. This, particularly in foreign countries, and where you cannot suddenly gain an accession of information, will be a material disadvantage to you. I on the contrary have lived for a considerable period under the same roof with the murderer, can single him out among a thousand, and re-

cognise his person, as far off as I can see him. I intreat you then, sir, to accept of my offer, and take me into your service, at least as far as this special purpose is concerned.

Travers of course consented to the overture of Ambrose with no less promptness than the other made it. While the creolian was engaged in superintending the interment of William, the youth whom he had thus taken into his service, employed himself in the few preparations that were necessary for his departure. He then proceeded immediately for London, and joined Travers at the hotel where he was directed to wait on him.

Here then were two men of different habits and stations of life, each acting from a several impulse, that entered into a common league to accomplish one object: Travers from the love he bore to the saviour of his life, whom at the same time he regarded as the most amiable and injured of men; and Ambrose from the horror

he conceived at the destruction of his mistress, and his devoted admiration of her excellencies, living and dead. Travers was new to Europe; his attention was not distracted by a variety of contending claims upon his powers of activity; and he vowed that he would contemplate this purpose alone, till the end he had in view should be completed. He was not to seek for the revenue and the means, that should enable him to pursue his object to its consummation. It would have been difficult for him perhaps, from the aristocracy of his education, to have stooped to all the obscure and devious paths in which it might be necessary to travel for the accomplishment of that which he undertook. The haughtiness of his nature, or the generosity of his spirit, would have stood in his way. He could not have moulded himself into a thousand shapes, have proposed all the artful questions, and crept through all the devious passages and windings that should interpose themselves.

But in Ambrose he had a coadjutor, that would amply supply the requisites in which Travers was deficient. Travers had a stubborn sense of honour, that would often counteract his wishes, and engender an intestine battle, materially injurious to the pursuit of his end. But Ambrose was single-minded; the map of his purposes was without a wrinkle. The course of his education had taught him no unnecessary scruples. He thought only of the object he had in view, and saw nothing else. He was no sooner satisfied that that was becoming and pure, than he heartily approved of all the means that led to it. He was of the mind of the poet: "Entire affection scorneth nicer hands." Nay; he took a sort of pride in all indispensible humiliation. The more crooked was the road he chose, the more he became convinced of the rectitude and soundness of the principle that impelled him.

A more formidable combination can scarcely

be imagined, than that between the two parties thus united for my destruction. They consulted at every step as to the manner in which their purpose was to be effected: the lofty mind and comprehensive views of Travers shaped the outline of their undertaking; while that of Ambrose, more microscopic, and accustomed to the minutiæ of detail, traced the minuter links and the subtler interweavings of incident with incident, respecting which the other might have failed. The former constructed the workshop of their purpose, and furnished it with all the requisite tools and materials, while the latter was prepared with admirable dexterity to turn his hand to every thing, and to execute like a skilful workman what the other conceived in its general form. Both had the grand requisites of a zeal and perseverance that no obstacles had the power to abate.

Ambrose first recollected the circumstance of the letter and portmanteau, which were

forwarded by Rowland to the principal town of the neighbouring county a few hours after my departure. Ambrose was not then suspected of harbouring any malicious intention towards me; it was taken for granted that all my servants were loyal; and it was therefore not difficult for him, who had already conceived a secret hostility against me, and had his eyes and ears open to every thing, to become acquainted with this commission, and to have two minutes' conversation with my own valet, before he set out on his errand.

Ambrose's first commission therefore, after the league that had been struck up between him and Travers, was to proceed without delay to the town and the inn, where I had appointed the rendezvous with my valet. Here he gained but little intelligence, more than that the rendezvous had actually taken place, and that, when I left the town, it was by the outlet that was distinguished as pointing towards London.

Moved by this information, Travers and Ambrose immediately set out for the metropolis. Here Travers employed himself in procuring such additional authority as might best abet him in the business of causing me to be apprehended and taken into custody, whether I should be found in England or abroad. Ambrose knew the name and residence of my town-solicitor; and it was therefore his province to watch about this man's door, it being morally certain, if I were in town, that I would not fail to make my appearance there. I had already been once with my solicitor, before Ambrose entered upon his function; the second time he saw me coming from the house. This circumstance afforded him the greatest satisfaction. He had no doubt that, having once come, I should come again. It was in the order of things, that I should shew myself the first time to give my directions, and again to see them fully executed. He was correct in his

calculation; but his error lay in mistaking my second visit for my first. He procured the proper officers from the police, and undertook to be their guide. But he was baffled in his expectation; I came there no more. He waited day after day, but was obliged to exchange his hope in this particular for despair.

One of the sciences which Ambrose had particularly cultivated, was that of what is technically called horse-flesh. He was versed in the various qualifications of roadsters, hunters and running-horses. In an interval of leisure he had therefore mechanically wandered towards one of those repositories of horses for sale, which are to be found in the skirts of the metropolis. He entered it. Here an object which immediately caught his attention was the saddle-horse that had brought me to town. Ambrose would have known it against a thousand. He engaged in a short parley with the groom that superintended the scene.

I am sure, said Ambrose vaguely, I have seen that horse before.

It is like you may, answered the groom. It has lately come up upwards of a hundred miles from one of the midland counties.

How comes it to be for sale? It is a remarkably fine horse.

I have a notion that the owner is going abroad. But I do not well know why I think so.

As they spoke the horse turned his neck, and neighed; a token that he recognised in Ambrose an old acquaintance. When I and Margaret rode out together, Ambrose had many times been with us, attending his mistress. The horse, being now removed to a new scene, felt a human pleasure in recognising an acquaintance.

Aha, said the groom, that horse and you, my lad, have known one another before.

Ambrose advanced towards the horse, and patted his neck. The man and the quadruped

gave each other the *bon jour*, after the mode of salutation known and established in such cases.

Ambrose of course related to Travers what had occurred to him; and, putting together this encounter and that at the solicitor's, they inferred, though perhaps without any sufficient reason, that I had determined to go abroad. Ambrose therefore made a point of frequenting the wharfs and places from which passengers and goods were usually embarked. One day, in the grey of the morning, he caught the glimpse of a figure that reminded him of Catherine. He presently became assured that he was not deceived; for the lady, glancing him at the same time, had instantly endeavoured to shroud herself from observation in her veil. She suddenly turned the corner of a street, and Ambrose lost sight of her. He would have been glad to have dogged her to her residence; but he was anxious to avoid any step that might engender alarm.

CHAPTER III.

UNAWARE of these circumstances, for Catherine did not even mention to me her momentary encounter with a person that looked like Ambrose, we embarked. We had scarcely passed the Foreland, before a heavy gale overtook us from the south-east, and kept us for two days, not without some danger, beating about in the waves of the North Sea, with the apprehension that we might be obliged to come to anchor in some port of the English coast. This incident was in itself no way of material importance; but, in the frame of mind in which I found myself, and the perilous condition in which I stood, circumstances which at any other time

would have appeared slight, made a strong impression upon me. I regarded this obstruction to my passage as ominous, and became apprehensive that, after the like fashion, every attempt I should make to escape from the tragical consequences of my rash proceeding, would be rendered ineffectual and abortive. Both Catherine and myself had been too much accustomed to the motion of the sea, to be much inconvenienced by that particular.

At length we arrived safely in the road of Dunkirk. I had already determined to fix my abode in the first instance in or near the city of Bruges. It was a place sufficiently remote from the port at which we landed, and was not greatly frequented either by merchants or travellers. In former times it had boasted of seventy thousand inhabitants, and had repeatedly had the honour of being made the residence of the court of the duke of Burgundy. It still retained many striking vestiges of its former

magnificence; but it now also exhibited no less the tokens of desolation, and its population scarcely exceeded the half of what it had formerly known.

In the neighbourhood of Bruges they count up to the number of thirty-seven villages, all of them agreeably situated, with a healthful air and a fertile soil, and pleasantly diversified with little plantations and gardens. Amidst these rural hamlets and retreats I thought I might reasonably hope to hide my head in safety. I assumed a different name, and proposed to pass my days in unnoticed obscurity.

Nor was it the least among my sufferings, that my daughter, the amiable, the accomplished, the sole representative of her sainted mother, the unblemished Emilia, suffered with me. She would in every case have been injured enough. My name would have adhered to her; and, however resplendent she might be in beauty, however unequalled in virtues, she would still,

in the midst of the loftiest society, be styled the offspring of a murderer.

But she chose a fate more horrible than this. She would not separate herself from the lot of her father. Because I was an exile, she determined to go into exile with me. She resolved never to divide herself from my nightly alarms, from the horrors that for ever beset me. She would not be persuaded not to regard it as her first of duties, to devote herself to my support and consolation. Thus she would never become a wife or a mother. She could never have a friend, unless she chose to embrace the mockery of friendship in the person of a man blasted for ever from the world. All the high hopes she had been entitled but just before to entertain, as the heiress of a plentiful fortune, as endowed with the amplest treasures of intellect, and enriched with the purest and most generous moral endowments, a creature that all the earth might fall down and adore, were ir-

retrievably extinguished.—Such was our situation at the best. It was with this miserable fragment of accommodation, that we had escaped from the shipwreck of the animating hopes and the enviable elevation, which, but for my folly, my unbridled and ungovernable passions, constituted the inheritance of both father and daughter.

Having advanced thus far, I deemed myself safe from the peril of any immediate pursuit. I had withdrawn, obscurely and unattended, from my native country, and embarked at the remotest quarter of its metropolis. I surely believed that I had cut off every clue, that might enable any one to ascertain that I had quitted the island of my birth. I had crossed to Dunkirk under a feigned name. I had then proceeded fifteen leagues by no frequented route to Bruges, and had there set myself down in an old and decayed city, of little resort either for merchants or travellers. Here

I proposed to reside, at least for a breathing time, if not for a more protracted season. I saw no reason why I should not prolong my stay for an indefinite period. If misfortune did not pursue me with unmitigable fury, I might at my pleasure either spend the remainder of my miserable life in this neighbourhood, or, having recruited my strength and tranquillity in this sequestered nook, cast about under its protection, as to what more eligible and inviting spot I might ultimately choose in which to set up my tabernacle.

Lodging therefore within the city at first, Catherine and I amused ourselves, or, I should rather say, I sought a momentary oblivion to my cares and the wretchedness of my condition, by wandering among the beautiful suburbs and hamlets with which the city is surrounded. All of them plainly spoke the contentment of their inhabitants; there was an air of cheerfulness, neatness and salubrity in all. Every thing was

upon a diminutive scale; a slight paling, a few fruit-trees, and a profusion of flowers, clothed in all the colours of the rainbow, and by the healthfulness of their appearance manifesting the careful tendance of the hand that cultivated them, were found on whatever side you turned your eye. A few rows of elms adorned the scene; and the soil was watered from the different canals with which the industry of man has enriched these provinces. Most of the cottages were humble, and expressed the simple equality of their inhabitants. Here and there, but thinly scattered, were dwellings of loftier pretension. But I know not why, these by no means displayed an equal charm. There was a sullenness and a loneliness about them, that plainly told you the owners thought themselves exiles from their proper sphere. They manifested a supercilious negligence, that strangely contrasted with the rest of the population. You could not help believing, that

the dwellers in these houses were straitened in their means of expenditure, and were aiming at a mock grandeur which they were unable fully to sustain. With these exceptions, which were easily overlooked among the general graciousness of the scene, the whole country wore the appearance of a beautiful lake, so tranquil and level was its surface; with this difference, that while water, however soothing to the sense of sight, presents you with the idea of bareness and waste, the wide champaign of the Netherlands was on all hands decorated with fertility, and every where shewed unequivocal tokens of cultivation and care.

The majority of these cottages were tenanted. Many of them descended from father to son; and the occupant who was born in them, would have deemed it little less than sacrilege so much as to have dreamed of removing to another abode. A few were announced by a placard, a little removed in the front of the

house, as being to be let. One day in our rambles, Catherine was struck with one of these, as being particularly inviting to her fancy. It fell back from the line of the rest; and a stranger might pass and repass repeatedly without being aware of its existence. Two or three large beech-trees interposed before it, and rendered it nearly invisible but to the most curious eye. These trees had the effect of darkening the apartments in the front of the house, while those which lay behind, and had nothing that intercepted the clear light of day, were by contrast peculiarly cheerful and gay. The windows on this side commanded a view of the open country, displaying an exuberant fertility of soil and elaborateness of tillage, while, as there were no dwellings in that direction but distant ones, the whole had an air of uninterrupted security and repose. There were trees also on this side, but more distant. There was a pond beneath these trees, the fa-

vourite haunt of the ducks from a neighbouring farm. There were on the same side haystacks, and a few outhouses appropriated to the uses of agriculture; but these could scarcely be said to disturb the general tranquillity of the scene.

Without delay we took possession of this village-tenement. The furniture required was easily supplied from the neighbouring city; and I did not judge it inconsistent with my plan of obscurity, "forgetting all, by all forgotten," to hire two Flemish servants, one male, another female, for our domestic uses. Both Catherine and myself had already resided abroad; and therefore we found little difficulty in such communication with these individuals and our humbler neighbours, as might be required for the ordinary purposes of life.

Catherine easily and without a murmur adapted herself to this low situation, so different from any thing to which she had been ac-

customed. She regarded the motive which had brought her here, as shedding a mild and consolatory beam on all she did and all she saw. She was here, attending on her father in his adversity, endeavouring to supply his wants and anticipate his wishes, smiling on his sorrows, with a smile, not cold, and in mockery, but of truest sympathy. She made a point of appearing at all times cheerful and serene, that I might not imagine that she was unhappy, or be reminded of the strange change that had overtaken me. Doubtless she was not without her fears, that, humble as our situation was, we might not be permitted to remain in it without interruption, that vengeance might pursue me, and that by some unlooked for accident our retreat might be betrayed to those who were most willing to hurt us. Guilt can scarcely ever be secure. But whatever were her thoughts in this respect, she kept them sacredly in the chamber of her own bosom. Outwardly she

was all encouragement. She seemed to wish and to expect to remain here for ever.

She had spent a large portion of her life in a state of separation from me; and she endeavoured to call to mind a variety of such characters and adventures as might prove most amusing to me. There was an innocence in her manner of narration, that gave a double zest to all she spoke. Malice and guile seemed to lose their most venomous features, when she was their historian. They drew a peculiar hue from the goodness of her heart. Sometimes you would scarcely suppose that she apprehended the baseness, the selfishness and deceit, that every where abound among mankind; but even then, when you thought she was most their dupe, a peculiar motion of her brow or her lip, a dropping of the eye, or an unexpected inflection of voice, so unobtrusive that it would have wholly escaped the notice of a superficial observer, proved to me at once that her pene-

tration was rapid and unerring, that she saw through the elaborateness of disguise, and viewed every thing in its true colours. Her narratives had all the charm, which is constantly found to attend upon an enlightened and quicksighted simplicity. Character was painted in them by a few unambitious and natural touches. Incidents seemed to fall exactly into their proper places, and were spoken of neither with disappointing brevity nor tedious circumlocution. There was not a word either too little or too much. A rapt attention waited on her speech. The melodious tones of her voice gratified the sense; while at the same time the spirit and variety of her delineations never suffered the thoughts of the listener to weary or to wander. Even I, who had a thousand thorns within my breast to prick and sting me, was composed in mute regard, and occasionally forgot my sorrows. In my turn I undertook to amuse my daughter with an ac-

count of scenes she had not seen, or with adventures (such as did not touch upon the acutest recollections of my soul) that were personal to myself. In addition to this, Catherine was an accomplished singer, and played divinely on her instrument, so that, when the evil spirit was upon me, it repeatedly happened that, like the shepherd in the Jewish history, she called forth the talent with which she was endowed, and the "evil spirit departed from me." I procured myself books of history, of wit, of imagination, and thus for a certain period beguiled my sorrows, and added wings to the slow foot of time.

Nothing could be more soothing and cheerful than the scenery with which I was surrounded. It was the pleasantest season of the year, when the heats of the summer were in a great degree abated, and the sun shone almost every day with a mild radiance. The crops were gathered in, and the vintage approached;

the farmer was prosperous; the peasantry were satisfied with their labours; and every one agreed to devote himself alternately to repose, to hilarity and amusement. But I, alas, found in myself the complete contrast of the objects around me. Every one was cheerful; but I was sad. The sun shone to the senses of the rest; but over me there hung a thick and pestilential cloud. The sun did not comfort me; and the stars shone for me in vain. The curse of God was upon me; and the fiends of memory and apprehension haunted me for ever.

I rarely went into the city, and had scarcely formed any connections. I called however sometimes at a bookseller's shop in the High Street; and I dropped in, though rarely, at the house of a Frenchman, with whom I had made acquaintance at Paris, but who for the last two or three years had resided at Bruges. The Frenchman was almost the only person, who could be called a visitor, that had entered

our village abode. He was a man who had devoted himself to the study of the classics, and was distinguished by a pure and elevated taste in the works of art. He was particularly fond of statuary; and his saloon, his study, and his stair-case were plentifully ornamented with choice copies of the remains of antiquity in this kind. Like myself, he had no surviving kindred, but one fair daughter, the "immediate jewel of his soul." This girl came to our cottage first with her father, and then more than once without him. She had imbibed much of his tastes, and had a passion for drawing. Bits of landscape she executed with no common skill; and some of her delineations from her father's statues were admirable. She had lived much with an aunt at Paris, a woman of manners not less frank, than they were elegant and graceful. But the Frenchman had been involved in an affair of state-intrigue; and, the cabal into which he had entered being detected

before it was mature, it had been necessary for him to engage in a sort of compromise with the ruling powers. They allowed him to retire into the Netherlands, and to retain undisturbed the rents of his property, with the understanding that he should never again set foot in the kingdom of France without a special licence being granted him for that purpose; the consequence of his violating this understanding being declared to be the forfeiture of his estates, and his being subjected to a rigorous proceeding in the criminal courts for the state-offence in which he was considered as being involved. He therefore passed his life in great privacy, and even changed his name.

The degree of resemblance between his fortune and mine, drew us into terms of considerable intimacy. I however was silent as to the real occasion that had compelled me to leave my country, and gave him to understand that, like him, I had been engaged in my own

country in an affair of a political nature, which had imposed on me the necessity of retiring into a temporary place of concealment. I had not however, like him, been fortunate enough to enter into a compromise with my own government, and was therefore in imminent danger of pursuit and apprehension. I carefully suppressed the real cause of my exile. Though M. Morlaix, that was the name by which my friend called himself, had become obnoxious to the government of his country, it did not follow that he would feel himself easy in the society of a murderer. Nor could I think in any case of making a voluntary disclosure of the opprobrium and disgrace that hung upon my name.

Thus we were drawn together by the apparent similarity of our circumstances. We were each under a cloud; we each bore a false name, and were each of us banished from our native country. These particulars prevailed on me for once to break through that thick veil

of solitude and sequestration to which I had thought all my following days and nights had been devoted. We made a sort of confident of each other: M. Morlaix speaking to me ingenuously, and in the fulness of his heart: and I in return imposing on him with a false sincerity, while I carefully concealed the ever-living worm that gnawed at my vitals. The very idea that I was throughout a deceiver, and that, if my friend ever came to know the truth, he would fling me from him like a serpent, nay, would perhaps himself be forward to deliver me into the hands of my inveterate enemies, poisoned all the pleasures I should otherwise have had in our communications, and rendered me perpetually uneasy, full of self-reproach and abasement. Such are the consequences of guilt!

The daughter of my friend (if it is not sacrilege so to apply the name) had cheerfully resigned all her former connections, and fol-

lowed her father into a land of strangers. There was therefore a considerable similitude between her situation and that of Catherine; and it seemed likely that, if circumstances had concurred with their inclinations, an intimate society and friendship would have sprung up between them. But both of them, and most especially my Catherine, upon whom the sacrifice was most urgent, regarded filial duty and affection as paramount to all other ties. She indeed never forgot for a moment the disastrous situation that had generated our banishment. She considered herself, in whatever place we might take up our temporary abode, as by indefeasible necessity a bird of passage merely. She did not expect to find rest for the sole of her foot. Her perpetual destiny was to eat her meat in fear, with her "loins girded, and her staff in her hand," ready to change the place of her abiding at an instant's warning; and

thinking herself too happy, if, by unremitted vigilance, and a spirit of sacrifice that disdained to repine, she might be fortunate enough to preserve her father's liberty and forfeited life.

CHAPTER IV.

We had dwelt but a few weeks in our present place of abode, when it happened one day that I took occasion to visit the bookseller's shop I have mentioned, and amused myself for half-an-hour with turning over the pages of some new publications. There was a room behind the shop, separated from it only by a window and a curtain, which was considered as the privileged resort of the gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood, and removed them from the ordinary customers, footmen and maid-servants, who came for their incidental purchases, and into which it was not the practice for strangers to make their way, unless intro-

duced. It was in this room that I took my seat. Among other things my evil genius prompted me to lay my hand upon a file of English newspapers. I was alone; and I thought I might indulge myself in the sad luxury of thus visiting in fancy my native country, upon the soil of which I might perhaps never again set my foot. I cast my eye upon the record of marriages and deaths, the persons most of them unknown to me, but some whose names were familiar, and some of them who ranked among my personal acquaintance.

In one of these papers my eye caught, at an instant's glance, by an unavoidable cooperation of the exterior and interior sense, my own name. It was most painful. I would have withdrawn my observation, and perused other articles in the sheet; but I could not. The paragraph which had thus fixed my attention was in the nature of an advertisement. It

contained my Christian and surname, the name of my country-seat, and of the county in which it was placed. It specified my stature, my complexion and my features. It stated that a warrant had been issued by the coroner of the county against me, upon a charge of wilful murder upon the body of William ——. It spoke of me as having fled from justice, and removed to a place of concealment. It mentioned that I was probably somewhere about the metropolis, but added that I was supposed to have meditated an escape to the continent; and concluded with the offer of a reward of five hundred pounds upon my being lodged in the jail of my native county, or being produced and properly identified at any of the police-offices of the city of London, the attestation of the magistrate of such office to his Majesty's secretary of state, being the proper authority for the payment of the reward to the person or persons by whom I should be delivered into custody.

Though all this was matter of course, was drawn up in the ordinary forms, and might have been anticipated by me almost word for word as I found it, yet such is the nature of the human mind, that a stronger and almost a new effect is produced upon us, when it comes to be subjected to our sense. It lost its vagueness, the misty and obscure form it previously bore, and thrilled through the marrow in my bones. It was like the writing upon the wall, inscribed there by visible "fingers of a man's hand," which when Belshazzar saw, "the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against the other."

The paragraph I beheld struck at my liberty and my life. Till the hour of the rash act I had committed, I had been a recognised and authentic member of the aristocracy of my country, protected by its laws in all my immunities and privileges, and honoured by my fellow-citizens. "When the young men saw me,"

they drew back with reverence, "and the aged arose," and saluted me. Now I was proclaimed as a loathsome and rejected member of the community, and a price was fixed on my head. If I continued to exist, it was only that the arm of public justice was too short to reach me; and I must be indebted for life to the rapidity of my motions, or the subtlety of my contrivances. My head was devoted, a victim to the demands of criminal law; and the code of civilization could not be satisfied without my extirpation. On my grave might with truth be inscribed, Here lies the body of a murderer! Men of reflection and sobriety would shrink from the spot; and the superstitious would expect to encounter my ghost in the shades of night, placing before their eyes the figure of one whom the earth could not hide, but who was condemned for ever to frequent the scene of his misdeeds.

Such were the reflections that haunted my

thoughts, as the paper lay before me that gave birth to them. My soul was in tumults. Alternately the ideas I have above expressed passed in sad and dreary order before me; and alternately they shaped themselves into a wild and terrific dance of death, till I no longer knew either where I was, or what I was. At length my thoughts fell into somewhat of a slower march; and I saw again the things that were before me and beside me.

I was no sooner recovered from this state of delirious confusion and agony, than I observed a person, who seemed to be newly arrived, and whom I had never seen before, engaged in discourse with the master of the shop. He distinctly pronounced the name Deloraine. I was by this time sufficiently master of myself to be aware, that this was not the name by which I was known in Bruges, and that it was not probable that, thus pronounced in the ear of the bookseller, it should

have in his mind the smallest connection with my person. The coincidence however was alarming and distressing to me: it had a few moments before been presented to my eye; it was now presented to my ear. What a thing is guilt! How is it with the soul of man, when every trifle shakes it?—I collected every sense I had in the sense of hearing, and was anxious that not a word that was uttered should escape me.

I soon found that the discourse of the stranger related to the affair which was the topic of the paragraph I had read. He told the bookseller that a murder had been committed in England, and that the perpetrator had escaped by sea. He said, that he had come thus far for the purpose of causing me to be delivered up to justice, that he had followed me to Dunkirk, and that, after having sought for me to no purpose in various directions, to the south and the east, he was credibly informed

that I had been seen at Bruges. He took out his pocket-book, and drew from it a placard, printed on a large sheet of paper, the contents of which were doubtless the same, as that of the advertisement that had occasioned me so much confusion. The bookseller and the stranger fixed their eyes together on this paper; the bookseller being within-side the counter, and the stranger without. Their heads were almost in contact. The finger of the stranger pointed to one particular and another; and the man of business sometimes shook his head, and sometimes nodded.

There was I alone in the inner room, while all this consultation was going on. A transparent window, with a slight curtain protecting me, was all that divided me from the men who had thus my fate in their hands. I was dumb; I moved neither hand nor foot; I scarcely dared so much as breathe. I expected every moment when the shopkeeper would throw open the

door behind which I was placed, and say, There is your man! He did not stir from the position in which he was placed. He still pored on the words of the placard. At length he raised his head, and fixed his eyes on the stranger.

I think, said he, I can give you some light in this affair.—These few words were succeeded by a momentary pause.

A man was in my shop yesterday, whose person precisely answers to the description in that paper. His appearance was very singular; I could not keep my eyes off from him. I said to myself, That man has certainly done something he ought not to have done. He was exceedingly flurried; and his looks were ghastly. He burst into my shop all at once, and yet seemed scarcely to know what he came for. He took up one or two books from my counter; at the same time looking around and behind with great uneasiness. At length he said, I am

going to Osnabruck; have you anything in the nature of a Guide, that may be of use to me? I handed him a volume from my shelves. He turned it over in a very hurried manner, asked me the price of it, paid for it, and, without saying a word more, passed into the street. I was so impressed with his appearance, that I directed one of my boys to follow him at a distance, and see where he went to. He lodged him at the Blue Lion. This was only yesterday evening: and he is therefore still there, or intelligence may probably be gained there of his further proceedings.

The change which thus took place, when things seemed to be at the worst, was an inexpressible relief to me. My situation had been like that of a man with a night-mare, who feels that he has the weight of a gigantic and preternatural monster cowering on his breast, becoming heavier every moment, threatening

utterly to extinguish the pulmonary action without which life cannot subsist. I had no power over a single articulation of my frame.

I had however no sooner found this relief, and the bookseller finished the detail of his conjectures, than the street-door opened; and who should enter to the two already in the shop, but Ambrose, the personal and trusted attendant upon my unfortunate wife? He was not in mourning: for, alas! these details, which are inseparable from every other establishment in my rank of life, could have no place under the disaster into which I had fallen. My houshold was scattered; and every one of its members had been suddenly driven to seek new resources for the means of their subsistence. He was not in livery; but he advanced with the tokens of submission and deference which characterise a servant, towards the stranger, who proved to be Travers, the sworn brother and avenger of my unfortunate victim. Seeing

him, Travers turned to the master of the shop, expressed himself greatly indebted to him for the information he had supplied, and he and Ambrose passed into the street together.

What then was the just inference from the new discovery which had thus been thrust upon me? Travers in his conversation with the bookseller had avowed that he had passed from England to Dunkirk, and from Dunkirk to Bruges, for the express purpose of causing me to be apprehended and delivered up to justice. I knew nothing of Travers; I had not so much as heard the name of the man who had but now been separated from me by a slight partition. But I could observe that he was a gentleman, a man of manners and education. He was not of the usual cast of the hired retainers of executive justice. He had plainly engaged in the affair from higher motives. He had devoted himself to the pursuit from generous sentiments, from pure friendship for the un-

fortunate deceased, and a determination that his destroyer should be visited with an ample revenge. It was obvious that he was not destitute of the means which should enable him to carry on his purpose to the end. By what inconceivable subtlety and diligence had he proceeded in his object so far unerringly, and traced me to the city where I reasonably hoped I could conceal myself for ever? A man of cool blood in my situation, despairing of success, would have abandoned all further contention, would have no longer disquieted himself in vain, but have said to his enemy, Here I am; act your pleasure upon me; dispose of me as may seem good in your sight.

Such was the sober judgment I might have made of my position, when I saw Travers only, and heard the discourse he addressed to the bookseller. In reality I had expected every moment when the master of the house would have thrown open the door on the other side

of which I was placed, and have said to him, There is the person you seek!

I escaped that danger. But how had I escaped? Travers had brought with him a person, who had long been in the habit of seeing me every day and at all hours, and had doubtless retained him in his service, and brought him with him in his inquisition, on account of that very qualification. Till then I had thought, If I can once escape from the apartment in which I am inclosed, if the bookseller does not recognise me by the description laid before him, and deliver me up to my pursuer, I am safe. I was like a bird, by nature free as air, and whose inheritance is the skies, —open the narrow cage in which he is confined, and he spreads his wings, and rejoices in his freedom, and darts into the trackless void, and possesses an unblemished and impregnable security. Even so I, like the bird, beat my wings against the wires of my cage, and was

impatient to get beyond the narrow bound in which I had been shut up.

In the mean time, supposing the door that divided me from my pursuer had been thrown open, I should still not have been destitute of hope. The tradesman and the stranger would have been placed before me; they would have examined my features; they would have compared them with the description contained in the placard they had read. What then? All likes are not the same. Fighting, as I should have been called on to fight, for my personal liberty, and against the threat that hung over me of an ignominious death, I felt full surely that I should have been able to maintain my ground with intrepidity. Nothing more would be necessary than that I should tell my story with constancy and firmness. Who is it that has the audacity to say that my name is Deloraine? I know nothing of the man; I am a stranger to his history; and will you dare to

deprive me of liberty, that I may be made to answer for his crimes? Away with so groundless a pretence! Stand off; and do not think to restrain and shackle me with your absurd conjectures and accusations!

But how different was my condition, when I clearly saw that the servant of my late wife was in the employment of my pursuer! He would have identified me at once. It was no longer a question of the nook that contained me, and my escape from which I anticipated with inconceivable joy. The little room behind the bookseller's shop I had regarded as my prison, and had pined with inexpressible eagerness to be enlarged from it. Now, on the contrary, I might almost regard it as my sanctuary. The moment I should get out into the street, I should be exposed to the hazard of my enemy. I could not turn a corner, that might not place him expressly in my way. If I were at one end of a street, and he at the other, he would

in all likelihood recognise me, so familiar to his sight were the outline of my person, the dependency of my limbs, and the carriage to which I was accustomed. I must call upon darkness to cover me, and clouds and thick darkness to enable me to pass along unperceived.

CHAPTER V.

I HAD however small time for deliberation. Ambrose and the stranger had passed out into the street together. As they had not exchanged so much as a word in the shop, it was unavoidable to believe that their first moments would be occupied with the information that Travers had received from the bookseller. They would then in all probability proceed to the Blue Lion, which the bookseller had pointed out as the present abiding of Deloraine. I knew in which direction that object would lead them. The Frenchman I have mentioned, fortunately resided in a different quarter of the town. I had no time for hesitation. There was a back-door

which led from the bookseller's counting-house into one of the lanes of the city. This door, though not often, was sometimes used by persons who resorted thither, as I had done, to read the newspapers and look over the new publications, to whom it afforded a shorter cut to their respective habitations than by passing into the street. I opened this door and withdrew. The circumstance probably would not be adverted to as singular. And, if it were, my situation did not allow a liberty of choice. I proceeded with all expedition to the residence of my friend, the only person who could render me the assistance I needed in my present emergency.

I found M. Morlaix at home and alone. I assumed an air of as much tranquillity and composure as I could put into my countenance. The character I had to personate was exceedingly different from that which truly belonged to me. In political enterprises, however hazard-

ous and daring, a man necessarily acts in co-operation with others, and for some public purpose; and the conception of the end he has in view, and the approbation and common sentiment of the honourable men with whom he had united himself, sustain him. I had no such support, and drew my only incitement to persevere from that desperate love of life, which is found in almost all cases to increase, in proportion to the seeming hopelessness of the circumstances that beset us.

Presently however I began to consider the subject in a very different light, in a light by no means so disheartening and so withering. I was not alone in the world. There sat beside me the illustrious, the unparalleled Catherine. She had every excellence that could dignify a woman, every perfection that could add lustre to human nature. She had youth; she had beauty; she had a penetrating understanding, and a susceptible heart. She was gifted with

the most exquisite taste; and the treasures of knowledge and intellect were her own. She was the abstract of all that is admirable in woman. Yet this being, thus endowed, gave herself up for me. She voluntarily shut herself out from that world which she was so eminently qualified to adorn. She stripped herself of the glories of her character, and submitted to be my obscure and fireside companion. She shunned the applauses of those who would naturally have been her associates. She watched my slightest emotions, and unweariedly sought to smooth the pillow under my anxious and aching head. She searched out every thing that could amuse and enliven me. She cheated the sad hours of my solitude. To light up one smile on my lips, to elicit one spark from my dim and despairing eye, seemed to her the all-sufficient reward of a thousand labours.

What most of all impressed me, was that I seemed of such vast consequence to this angelic

creature. Poor and despicable as I was in myself, I derived an unquestionable value from her. I regarded myself with inexpressible self-abasement; I was nothing, and less than nothing in my own opinion, a vile and loathsome weed, incumbering the earth, and infecting the air with contagion: but I thought of Catherine, and became in a sort endeared to myself. She seemed to live only in me; there was the appearance as if she would perish without me, that the existence of this resplendent being was indissolubly connected with my frail existence. Oh, then I became of consequence in my own eyes! I was eager to preserve myself from destruction, since so lovely a being seemed to depend upon me, even as the most glorious and delicate flower of the garden draws the continuity of its being from the unsightly root. I saw myself in her. I had a motive for taking care of myself, and preserving me from harm, since the most excellent being I ever knew, the

most purely disinterested, was only to be preserved, by means of my being preserved.

I therefore entered with earnest heart into the measures which the crisis I was placed in demanded from me. I told my friend that I had but that moment discovered that there were persons in Bruges who were in pursuit of me, and who, as I firmly believed, were armed with full powers to apprehend me, backed by the authority of those who exercised the supreme government of the Austrian Netherlands. I added, that I had myself actually beheld, without being discovered, one of the individuals dispatched from England for this purpose, who was perfectly acquainted with my person and features. It was therefore of importance to me, that I should quit Bruges and its neighbourhood without the smallest delay, and, if possible, leave no vestige behind by means of which the new place of my retreat should be traced.

My friend saw the earnestness and excitement under which I spoke, and, without requiring any fuller elucidation of my mystery, entered with an entire good will upon the performance of what I required of him. He undertook to provide a couple of horses, such as in England are known by the name of galloways, for the immediate escape of myself and Catherine. In the mean time I dispatched a note to her, informing her of the necessity of our decampment, and desiring her to have every thing prepared. The night was no sooner set in, than I ventured alone into the streets, and, finding no tokens of any one observing me, hastened with all expedition to our village. The horses were fully in readiness; and Catherine was waiting in her travelling dress.

Oh, my child, said I, as soon as I saw her, how bitter a potion is this which I administer to you! We are no sooner sat down in a little apparent quiet, than we are instantly obliged to

quit our abode. My doom is perpetual wandering and apprehension, eternal concealment and ever-new alarm, which can never be terminated otherwise than by the actual occurrence of the worst that we fear. Repent, while there is yet time! Sever your young and healthful frame from my withered and accursed stock! Return to your friends in England, and be, as you are so well qualified to be, the ornament and pride of every circle in which you move!

My father! replied the heroic girl, do not think you shall ever change my determined purpose. Fear me not! I have made up my mind to every thing that can happen; and nothing can shake my firmness, or discompose the settled temper of my spirit. I count every thing that I can do as a glory, and shall think myself hallowed and consecrated by every service I can render you, and every the least mitigation I can afford you in your trials. The greater are your difficulties and distress, the

more resistless is my obligation never to separate myself from you.

How I adored the heroic partner of my toils! She turned her back upon the retirement in which we had fixed ourselves, and cast herself once more a stranger and a wanderer upon the world without a sigh. An unknown and a celestial energy seemed to sustain her. I spoke a few words to our servants at parting. I said that perhaps we should be absent for some days. If the time proved of longer duration, I referred them to M. Morlaix for explanation and orders.

CHAPTER VI.

CATHERINE and myself speedily gained the high road. It was now deep night, and as dark as we could desire. Our view in the first instance was to attain the city of Ghent; and the road thither was so obvious that we could scarcely miss it. Though the distance between Ghent and Bruges were only thirty miles, yet such a removal, in the first instance, was of inconceivable importance to me. It would set a palpable distance between me and my pursuers; and, till that was done, I felt, as Homer expresses it, their breath sensibly blowing in my neck behind me. I seized the opportunity of our commencing journey, to give Catherine

in few words the leading particulars of that which had occasioned me so much terror and alarm.

We then proceeded for some time in silence and at a round pace. Catherine had been a traveller, and was an excellent horsewoman. We had the road to ourselves; and, having now advanced for an hour uninterrupted, I began to feel within me a comparative tranquillity. Of a sudden, Hush! said Catherine; surely I hear behind us the steps of a horse advancing in the same direction. I thought so to. By degrees the thing became more perceptible; and it was plain the stranger gained upon us. My soul was for the moment bound up in the sense of hearing; and I could perceive that the unknown person was alone. This took off from the feeling of terror and alarm I might otherwise have entertained. I judged at once that it was most improbable that the persons I had seen at the bookseller's shop should be in the

least concerned with this, or could so instantaneously have discovered the route I had taken, and be already in my track.

The stranger was extremely well mounted; and he gained upon us every instant. He was speedily by my side. It is well, said I: as he has advanced upon us so rapidly, no doubt he will pass us as quickly, and be presently out of sight. In this however I was disappointed: the horseman had no sooner come up with us, than he checked his pace, and manifested a seeming purpose to install himself our companion. I was exceedingly disturbed at this. Though I had decided that he had no connection with my dreaded pursuers, yet my critical situation, and the ever-alive worm of conscience did not fail to inspire me with uneasiness, and lead me to question whether my first decision had not been too hasty. I carefully surveyed the stranger; but he was enveloped in a cloak, even to his very head, so that I could gain no

satisfaction. I intuitively felt a disinclination to speak to him, as if the very sound of my voice might in some way become a source of injury. The scene therefore for a time proceeded in silence. I endeavoured in every way I could to shake off the unwelcome intruder. I checked the pace of my horse to a walk; and presently after urged him into a gallop. Catherine understood me, kept a quick eye upon me, and did as I did. But unfortunately so did the stranger. Determined in my purpose, I caused my horse to stand still; so did Catherine; so did the stranger.

Provoked beyond measure by the obstinacy of the intruder, I felt the necessity of breaking silence. I said to him in French, at the same time disguising the tone of my voice, Sir, have I the honour of your acquaintance? If not, I give you good night.

All men know all men, replied the stranger. And for your good night I would thank you,

save that you are giving that which you have not to bestow.

The words thus uttered sounded incoherent enough. I congratulated myself however that the voice in which they were spoken was entirely new to me. Meanwhile this circumstance did not alter my determined purpose; and I proceeded:

I do not well understand your observations; nor do they seem intended to be understood. All that I have to say therefore is, that it is not my custom to ride with strangers in a public road; and I beg that you will choose your pace, that I may be at liberty to choose mine.

Pace! cried the stranger: I do not know what to say to that. Some men drive; and others are driven. The wisest, of whom I am one, do something between both. You perhaps are for Ghent; now I am going to Osnabruck.

The word Osnabruck immediately struck me, though for some moments I could not tell why.

At length I recollected it as the destination of the false Deloraine, who, fortunately for me, had been substituted for the true in the book-seller's shop.

If I had my own will, continued the stranger, I should now be fast asleep in bed at the Blue Lion at Bruges. But impertinent intruders have forbidden this; and I am accordingly now at midnight at a stand-still on the public road.

Those fellows, he pursued, with their pretence of talking English thought to deceive me; but I was up to them. I got off from my quarters unseen; and here I am, mounted upon my faithful steed, which, when I please, goes at a rate, that no one yet has been able to overtake.

These observations were truly alarming to me. From them I concluded that Travers and Ambrose had in some way missed of the man, of whom they had gone in pursuit. His destination however was notorious. As he had

proclaimed it at the bookseller's shop, so probably had he at the Blue Lion; and, if I did not take care, the scent of the false Deloraine might serve to guide my enemies in the track of the true. I determined however to make one more effort by mild means to shake off the intruder. I said:

If your arrival at Osnabruck is so important, consider, there are many roads that lead to it. Is it advisable then that you should pursue so public a way as that of Ghent?

Oh, excuse me, sir, said the stranger. I have many reasons for choosing these public highways: chiefly, that it enables me to pick up followers; for a king without subjects is but a shadowy monarch. I know my own greatness; but there are those who would gladly clip my wings. They once tried it, by shutting me up in a house with bars to the windows, and spikes to the walls; but I gave them the slip. And now, to say the truth,

that I have found companions, I care not if they overtake us. My pursuers are but two: and we two are a match for those two all the world over. Not to mention the lady, whose presence is to me the assured harbinger of victory.

As he spoke, the stranger threw back the cape of his cloak, which had hitherto concealed his face; and I took a survey of his person. He rode bareheaded; and I could trace, in the wildness of his gestures, and the disturbed expression of his figure, a confirmation of what I already suspected—that he was a poor, deranged creature, recently escaped from his keepers.

I had tried temporising methods with him in vain. It was of the last importance to me to be rid of him. Exclusively of the circumstance, that his presence might be a guide to my pursuers, and prove a shackle to my proceedings in a case of emergency, I also regard-

ed him as a spy upon my movements, and as sufficiently reasonable amidst all his incoherence, to be able to give dangerous information respecting my motions. I therefore determined upon a last step to free me from his presence. The thought of the peril to which I was exposed had already urged me to put my horse to his swiftest pace, to which the man had corresponded as before. Without checking my progress, I rode up close to his side, and said to him in an emphatical manner:

Harkye, sir, I have no more time for trifling!—I know you for an escaped lunatic; and it is therefore my duty to seize you, and convey you to a place of safety.—And, saying this, I stretched out my hand, as if intending to arrest him.

This proceeding of mine had the desired effect. The maniac suddenly drew his steed several yards apart from me, and then,—after having indulged in a portentous and fearful

laugh, and exclaiming, I am not mad enough however to be seized by you—urged his horse to the top of his speed, and was presently far a-head of us on the road to Ghent.

CHAPTER VII.

I MUST frankly confess myself at this distance unable to recollect in order of time and place the endless persecutions I have been fated to undergo. No day could I call my own; no hour have I been free from the direst alarm. The watches of the night have been full of terror to me. All day I have watched, not perhaps with the sense of seeing, for that would have been too perilous to me, but with the sense of hearing, for the approach of the foe, for those stealthy steps which I supposed ever at hand to surprise me. If at any time weary nature within me sought for repose, if my senses were steeped in a short oblivion,

this was far from being a refreshment to me. My visions were wild, incoherent, tormenting, beyond the power of words to describe; my soul was tumultuously hurried along in restless ecstasy; I felt that every thing which presented itself to my inner sense was inconsistent, contradictory, impossible; yet, impossible as it was, I was compelled to believe it. My dreams were endless; I wandered among rocks and deserts with failing and wearied steps; yet the actual time consumed by these dreams was but as a moment: I started and woke with ever-fresh alarm, as if of some terrific certainty. My blood was fevered; my brain was maddened; my hours were full of delirious imaginations, which again were sobered and reduced to compulsory steadiness by the near apprehension of some fatal violence. The only mitigation I experienced to these tortures was in the presence and soothing care of my daughter, when I could have her near me, which was not always.

How then is it possible that, amidst all this disorder of my brain, this frenzy of the soul, I can recollect things in the order of time and place? I cannot. Only here and there by some strange accident I call to mind a memorable scene, which trenched too deep a gash in my spirit ever to be forgotten. These scenes are insulated. I cannot form an image of what went before or what followed. They start up like those rare spots which are found by travellers in the deserts, breaking by brief intervals the gloomy and cheerless monotony of the rest of the journey.

One of these was when, after having undergone various alarms during the day, sufficiently groundless perhaps, but which in the diseased state of my feelings carried with them the force of irrefragable truth, we arrived within sight of a solitary mansion. We were unattended and on foot. The mansion was on the shores of the Rhine. It was built on the crag

of a rock, sheltered on one side by a high wood, and on the other bordered by ravines, which led by an irregular and devious course to the very banks of the river. Between the two, and in the front of the house, ran a narrow road, uneven and rugged in its surface, but sufficient for the occasions of the tenants of the mansion. The road, though of small breadth, and shut in for the most part by the nearly impracticable asperities of the soil, had not however on the one side or the other any precise limits, but had occasional openings, affording an opportunity to the traveller to penetrate, if he so pleased, into the less obvious parts of the scenery, and to withdraw himself from the observation of the plodding and ordinary wayfarer. Into the entrance of a sort of cavern, which was among the diversities of the scene, Catherine and I, after some hours of disconsolate wandering, withdrew ourselves to consult upon what was next to be done. We

found a sort of natural bench, which seemed to court us to a few minutes' repose.

We had each of us cast a wistful look upon the mansion which was at hand. There was no other refuge near; and night was shutting in fast upon us. We seemed therefore impelled to seek the shelter of this roof. In solitary situations hospitality to a certain extent is the inevitable duty and lot of the inhabitants; and they are ordinarily prepared to yield it. Suspicion and cautiousness however were entailed upon us; and it appeared more advisable to feel our way in the first instance, than to plunge at once into what might be not unattended with peril. Catherine was young: she had a light and innocent heart, and nothing to restrain her exertions. She accordingly offered, and I did not contradict her affectionate suggestion, to go first, and undertake to sound the disposition, and observe upon the character, of the tenant of the mansion.

She proceeded accordingly. I, but at a safe distance, and with a fluttering heart, watched her steps. She found that the principal occupier of the mansion was a woman; and Catherine was immediately admitted to her presence. Her appearance was prepossessing; her manner was polished and humane. She was about forty years of age. Though Catherine accosted her first in French, she was both surprised and delighted to find her English. Catherine had been much of a traveller: but English blood still flowed in her veins; and the earliest habits of her life yet savoured of her native country. It may be that the habits of a Frenchman, a German, or a Spaniard are not less congenial to our general nature: but to a native of this island they unavoidably appear in some degree artificial; and we feel ourselves more confidential and assured, when we impart our communications to one of ourselves. Catherine told a simple tale, of herself and her father, wan-

derers at a distance from their country, being benighted in this solitary place. The appearance of my daughter told the rest. The mistress of the mansion saw in her a young person of superior character and refined sentiments. Her beauty, her complexion, the elegance of her manners, her speech true to nature and to feeling, interested the heart of the lady, and instilled an undoubting persuasion that she could do nothing but right in yielding to the petition of such a suitor, which she did in the most gracious and encouraging manner. Catherine sought me with her report; and we were speedily installed in a private room, with a cheerful fire blazing on the hearth, and all other accommodations that could conduce to the refreshment of a weary traveller. The manner of our hostess put us at our ease; and we relished with especial zest the sweets of a comfortable roof in a remote and sequestered part of the world, after the toil and uncertain-

ties of the preceding days. Our hostess sat down with us, and tried to amuse us. She was sparing of questions, as she was too well bred to be guilty of impertinence. We spoke of London and its societies, in a manner that implied that we were familiar with the best circles. We spoke of various cities and courts of Europe. We talked of the various masterpieces of Italian art, of poetry, and of some of the greatest and most striking events of modern history. On all these subjects our hostess expressed herself well, with true taste and genuine feeling of all that is best and most worthy of approbation. Each party gained on the other; and we presently felt, not as if we had met this evening for the first time in our lives, but rather as if accustomed to one another's habits, and familiar with our respective modes of thinking and speaking. Our hostess was clearly a woman of great refinement and much sensibility. My character and habits were

fixed by a course of long prosperity and the consciousness of being well received wherever I went. A cloud indeed had for many weeks come over me, and had so far made me but the wreck of what I had been. But this was new to me, and had not yet become a part of my nature. Whenever the immediate sense of my adversity was for a short time beguiled, my spirits mechanically rose, and I became in a degree all that I had been in my best days. And Catherine, the enchanting Catherine, had always, in the simplicity of her manner, the sweetness of her tones, and the grace of all she said and did, every thing that was irresistible, and that won at least all who were capable of appreciating her, to feel towards her the emotions of a true friendship, that, once begun, could never be dissolved.

While we were thus engaged, and every thing passed in a manner the most congenial to frankness and security, the alarm reached us of some

new arrival and encroachment upon our endeared solitude. I know who it is, said our hostess; but he shall not disturb us. It is my cousin, who was here yesterday, and promised I should see him again to-day. Poor fellow! he is engaged in an ugly enterprise, but which is hallowed, and rendered glorious in his eyes, by the demands of friendship and justice. He is a native of the West Indies, made up of all the fiery elements, which are the inheritance of men born beneath a tropical sun.—But I will tell you more of him, when I have gone and received him, and placed him in the apartment I have destined for him.

Saying this, she withdrew, and left us full of amazement at the few and imperfect hints she had uttered. My God! cried I, Catherine, it is Travers, that our hostess has left us to receive! My conscience tells me so: it can be no other. Thinking that I had reached a place of security, I have rushed into the lion's

mouth. There can be no escape for me now. The very solitude and remoteness of this mansion render it my prison. It will be impossible for us to withdraw ourselves unseen; and, if without notice and leave-taking we attempt it, this will only serve to fix upon us a confession that I am the party which this man has come so far, and taken such a world of pains to secure.

No, replied Catherine; we must do nothing, and must wait the event. The phrases that our hostess has dropped are alarming; but they are in the utmost degree vague, and may mean a thousand other things as well as that which we fear. It is a guilty conscience, that supplies us with interpretation, and points the arrow against us. At all events our surest chance is in neutrality. If it be Travers, and we remain quiet, we may yet get off unsuspected; we may have entered the very den of the destroyer, and nevertheless withdraw ourselves unhurt.

While we spoke thus, our hostess returned. This youth, said she, is in pursuit of a murderer. The man who has fallen by the hand of a lawless assassin was the most innocent and virtuous of mortals, and had saved my kinsman's life. They had but just come over together from the West Indies to England. Travers, that is the name of my cousin, stung to frenzy by the cruel and remorseless act which has consigned the brother of his soul to an untimely grave, devotes his life to the sacred cause of vengeance, and vows he will never cease from the pursuit, till he has made the perpetrator a memorable and ignominious victim to the shrine of public justice. He knows, as he tells me, that in ordinary cases the apprehension and bringing to trial those by whom criminal law has been flagrantly violated, is consigned to the inferior ministers of justice, men dedicated to this employment, and who are cut off from the more creditable branches of civilised society.

But, devoted as my cousin is to the cause of friendship, and exasperated at so unparalleled and atrocious a violence, he judges that the motive, and the crisis in which he is placed, level all distinctions of action, and render that which in other cases would be vulgar and dishonourable, in the highest degree glorious. In short he has laid aside all other pursuits, and protests that he will never desert his enterprise, nor yield attention to meaner and ordinary things, till he has brought this to its full completion. He knows that the offender is in this neighbourhood; and he has been two or three times upon the point of falling in with him, when by the most perverse accidents his pursuit has been eluded, and the guilty person has for the moment escaped. But he is confident of ultimate success, and is rendered only the more sanguine in his search by the experience of past disappointments.

What a hearing was this to me! A thin par-

tition perhaps, at most only a flight of stairs and a closed door, separated me from the man that thirsted for my blood. It was also clear that the lady, whose hospitality has received me, fully participated in her kinsman's feelings, and would rejoice in his success. I had therefore every reason to conclude, that the event she sincerely wished, she would have no scruple to assist in accomplishing.

Yet I felt at once that timidity and a cautious proceeding would be the farthest in the world from affording me aid. The only mode that remained for my escape must be, in endeavouring to make a friend of the person from whom I had just received a detail of these particulars, and, if possible, interesting her generosity in my favour. A resolute and daring conduct, as so often happens in a great crisis of human affairs, was all I had to trust to. My manner and address suddenly became in the utmost degree solemn and fervent.

Hear me, madam, I conjure you, said I; and at least do not inconsiderately decide to my disadvantage. My life is in your hands; I willingly place it there; I see that in you which assures me I cannot repent my confidence. I am the very man that Travers is in search of. You have only to open that door; you have only to articulate his name; and my fate is sealed for ever. But I am tired of mummery and tergiversation. To you, madam, whom I feel to be truly generous and worthy of all honour, I will practise no deceit. I put my fate into your hands. I am not a base assassin; I had the strongest reasons for what I did. I could clear myself to your satisfaction.—But I will not dwell on that. It is enough that you are the arbiter of my fortune; for that reason I am confident that you will not deliver me, bound hand and foot, to my enemy.

It will easily be supposed that my daughter did not remain a quiet spectator of this scene.

The suddenness of my determination at first terrified her. But in an instant she saw I was right. She threw herself upon her knees, embracing me; she cast a look resistlessly imploring upon our hostess. The innocence of her countenance, her transcendant beauty, the purity of filial tenderness and devotion which was marked in every feature, made the scene inexpressibly interesting. She spoke not; but her silence was more omnipotent than words.

You reason justly, said our hostess. I am placed in a cruel dilemma. But I will not do that, with which all my life after I should reproach myself as a base and dishonourable action. I give no heed to what you say, that, if you had opportunity, you could clear yourself to my satisfaction. Such is the deceitfulness of the human mind, that there is scarcely a criminal in the world that will not go as far. He always in his own opinion had the strongest reasons for what he did. He always had the

highest palliations and the most urgent motives. I rely on my nephew. I know the purity of his principles. I am satisfied of the disinterestedness of his conduct. What but the clearest conviction, could have brought him here, could have drawn him off from the glorious career which in a thousand kinds he had before him, and engaged him in the ignominious occupation of a blood-hunter? I sympathise with him with my whole soul. I wish him success from the bottom of my heart. He has chosen his part; and I am satisfied he has not chosen it but for the most undeniable reason.

He has chosen his part; and I am also to choose mine. You have come under my roof. You have implored my protection, and have obtained it. You employed no false pretences, though you did not think proper to speak out the whole truth. I could not perhaps do less under the circumstances than grant you the shelter you demanded. At all events I have

done it; and what I have done cannot be retracted. You have sat by my hearth; you have placed yourself in my power. By what I have done, I have engaged myself, that no injury shall happen to you while you are here, that you shall go forth as free and unharmed as when you entered my gates. To this I am bound by every tie of honour; and my bond shall be redeemed to the minutest letter.

We must therefore consider how this is to be done. You cannot be safer than in this house. You are as in a sanctuary. The last thing Travers would believe is, that I, who honour him beyond any other living creature, would extend a shelter over, and undertake to conceal from him, the individual he has crossed sea and land to find and apprehend. That you should have presented yourself a suppliant at my door, is scarcely less than a miracle; that I should have consented to harbour you, after having known you for what you are, is equally in-

credible. If Travers saw you with his eyes, and heard your name pronounced, he would not credit the reality. In these respects therefore you are perfectly safe. I may make him believe whatever I please.

But this condition of things must not last longer than it shall be indispensibly necessary. We must wait for the dead of the night, or rather for an hour before daybreak, to release you. I will send with you a trusty servant as a guide, who will do whatever I please, and who will tell no more than I authorise him to tell. Travers knows not that there are any strangers under my roof, nor shall he know. Your arrival and your departure shall be equally a secret to him.

CHAPTER VIII.

Our hostess recommended to us to take a small boat, and endeavour to make our way up the Rhine. There was sufficient convenience for this purpose at a village about a league from her house; and the multitude of craft of all dimensions continually passing up and down the river promised as much concealment in this way of proceeding, as in any that could be thought of. Our hostess had apparently no farther interest in us, than that we should be safely dismissed from her dwelling, and that no misfortune should overtake us in consequence of our having been for a few hours under her protection.

We arrived without accident at the village she had specified. The dawn of the day broke upon us as we reached the wharf which was the place of our destination. By good luck we encountered a boatman, who belonged to the other side of the river, but who had landed a passenger late on the preceding evening, and who was waiting for the day before he should return. We engaged him to take us on as far as Mayence. The wharf happened to be wholly deserted at the moment of our arrival; and, as secrecy and expedition were specially our objects, we lost not an instant in embarking and setting out. We could not perceive that a single eye witnessed our departure; and thus we seemed cut off from any immediate pursuit. We had only a single waterman; and, but that the wind favoured us, should have had small chance of making our way against the rapid stream of the river, whose force was presently increased by the narrowness of its dimensions,

and the high mountains which shut it in on either side.

This feature however did not occur in the commencement of our expedition. The surface of the river was adorned with a number of vessels of different sizes pursuing their various destinations, either up or down the stream, or across it from one side to the other. I had sufficient reason to believe that Travers was safely housed beneath the roof of our late hostess. I nevertheless anxiously watched every bark of similar dimension to our own, with the fear that it might be freighted with my so much dreaded enemy. Though from haste and alarm I was for the present slenderly provided with the accommodations of a traveller, I had not failed to bring with me a small telescope, the use of which was calculated in some degree to diminish my fears, by rendering the objects which approached me more distinct, and thus delivering me from an apprehension,

which would else have been vague and in a manner universal. As the day advanced, the chance of my being successfully pursued increased. Boats with a slight difference in their construction are often found to make their way with a very different degree of rapidity; and, whenever I saw a skiff with a sail proceeding up the stream, my terror for the moment was increased, and I shuddered through every fibre of my frame. My alarms however for the present were nugatory; and I suffered only from the fear of what might happen.

By and by the wind which had favoured us sunk to a dead calm; and at the same time the bed of the river narrowed, and the rapidity of the stream greatly increased. Our boatman, who was a powerful man, was for some time engaged in making vigorous efforts to contend with the force of the river. All at once however he changed his plan, and without saying a

word, turned the head of his bark, and made for shore. I asked him what he was about.

Why, master, said he, do not you see that with all my strength I am not able to gain upon the stream, but am rather carried backwards towards the place from which we came? I must put into this cove, and wait till a fresh breeze springs up favourable to our voyage. Or you may make signal for the public passage-boat, which will be here ere long, and which will be able to contend with the power of the river, though I am not.

This was disastrous intelligence to me. I was anxious to outstrip the enemy that might be in pursuit of me; and here I was compelled to stand still, as if for the very purpose that he should be able to overtake me. The remedy too that our boatman suggested, was in cruel discord with my views. I wished that all my movements should be secret, and that there

should be no eye to remark any thing particular in me, and observe the indications of what passed in my mind. And he recommended a public passage-boat, where I should be embarked with perhaps thirty or forty persons, many of whom it was likely would have nothing better to do, than to observe the peculiarities of a stranger, and who, by their garrulity which meant nothing, might involve me in the most tragical consequences.

As we approached the shore, I cast my eyes intently round, and with the help of my glass endeavoured to ascertain the face of the country. The shore was rocky and wild, with scarcely any vestiges that could betoken human cultivation and industry. The pinnacles of the rocks were savage and romantic; and here and there a fir or a pine, which seemed rooted among the acclivities by accident, bent its head this way and that, the sport of the elements. On one of the highest points I observed what

seemed to be almost the ruin of an old castle; and I could not but wonder how human caprice should ever have fixed on so unapproachable a situation. It suddenly came into my head, that a situation like this would be peculiarly favourable to my designs; and I thought that if, on enquiry, circumstances appeared to render the scheme practicable, I would here at once take up my abode, in a place scarcely less inaccessible than a desolate island in the South Sea. I enquired of my conductor, whether he could give me any information respecting this castle.

Why, sir, said he, I know very little about it. I only know that it is deserted of its lord, who has two or three eligible residences in a more convenient and inviting part of the country. This castle he abandons to an old *concierge*, who lives in it rent-free, one of the conditions of the tenure to the lord being, that its walls shall remain standing, and that the place shall continue a human habitation. Ruined

as it appears, it is of no small extent, and its apartments and stair-cases constitute, as I am told, a very labyrinth.

And what distance, I pray, may there be from the creek into which you are about to thrust your boat, to the gate of this castle?

The distance to the flight of a bird is almost as nothing; but among the windings of the rock it is little less than two miles; and desperate hard road it is.

And you can get no further up the river till a fresh breeze shall spring up?

Certainly not. The force of the stream is too great for one man unaided to have any chance to contend with it.

Very well. We shall undoubtedly be near, and shall not fail to observe any change in the weather. If it occurs soon, we shall probably join you, and proceed. If not, I will pay you now what is reasonable for the distance we have come.

Upon these terms we parted with our waterman, and addressed our steps, though with great and unavoidable deviations, towards the castle above us. The path was often extremely narrow, and was interrupted by huge fragments of the rock and other obstacles. At length we reached a sort of platform or table-land, where we were glad to take a few minutes repose.

While we were seated, a stranger approached us. He was hard-favoured, and had that about him which bore marks of no trivial degree of labour and exertion. He appeared to be about fifty years of age. His hair was black, rough, and in considerable quantity. He was of a dark complexion : and his eyebrows were thick and bushy. His eyes expressed a strange mixture of audacity and cunning. He wore a jerkin of leather ; and his lower garments were of the coarsest texture : yet altogether he had not the air of a common labourer, but on the

contrary the appearance of a certain authority, and as if he were oftener in the practice of commanding than of being commanded. I immediately conjectured that he was the *concierge* that our waterman had told me of.

He accosted us. May I ask, said he, what you do here? It is a rough road you have come, and few persons frequent it.

We are strangers, I replied; and our curiosity was excited by the wild and romantic appearance of the castle above us. You, sir, are probably one of its inhabitants.

I am. I am not the proprietor, as you may guess. But, deserted of its proprietor, I may in some sort call myself the master.

It seems to be of considerable dimensions. Having thus far conquered the difficulty of the approach, may we be allowed to gratify our curiosity by surveying the building, as far as that may be done without disturbing its inmates?

For that matter it has at present few inmates.

Only myself and my daughter and an old maid-servant. The hinds from the neighbouring hamlet and coppices are in the habit of bringing us what we want. I say neighbouring hamlet; but it is not less than a league distant, in the plain below. As to the building, it is, as you may suppose, waste and wild, having no other fixed inhabitant than myself. There are however some of the better apartments that are sufficiently tenantable; and there is plenty of the old furniture. But I have nothing particular to engage me just now; and you are welcome to see what is to be seen.

Saying this, he led the way; and we found the rest of our course less steep and laborious than that which we had already passed. We came to what had been a moat; over which there existed the remains of a bridge. There was a flight of steps that led to the building. We knocked at the gate; and an old woman, the maid-servant our guide had spoken of,

with a thousand wrinkles, the marks of solitude, discontentment and care, admitted us. She knew her master's knock.

The first apartment we entered was a spacious hall, which seemed destined to no particular use, except as leading to the apartments beyond. It was hung round with the antlers of deer, a few fishing-nets, and two or three fowling-pieces. The walls were in many places discoloured and mouldy, and the plaster every here and there peeling away, and tumbling in heaps of rubbish upon the floor below, which no one had been at the pains to remove. At each side of the hall, to the right and left, there was a door, apparently leading to some rooms of humbler use. At the further end of the hall there was another flight of steps which seemed to conduct to the interior and more select part of the building.

These rooms to the right and left, said our guide, are what I occupy for myself. They

are perfectly plain and without ornament. But they are sufficient for my use; and, as being nearest to the outer gate, lie most handy and convenient to me. They have also closets and cellars and vaults in abundance, which I do not suffer to lie altogether unemployed.

We mounted the flight of steps at the further end. Our guide had taken the precaution to bring with him a huge bunch of keys, which hung within the door of his own apartment. With some difficulty and exertion he turned the lock, and threw open the folding-doors which led to the reserved part of the building. What seemed to be a suite of rooms now lay directly before us, and at either extremity to the right and left was a lofty flight of stairs.

This house, said our guide, was built partly for shew, but still more for defence and security. It was constructed in the time of the civil wars of Germany between the Catholics and the Protestants, when every castle almost was

possessed by a claimant of a different religion, and the parties were in the utmost degree exasperated against each other. The castle therefore was formed on the plan, that, even if an enemy forced the gates, and poured with a lawless crew into the interior, the persons most sought and principally persecuted, might still be safe from the lynx-eyed vigilance and hatred of those who pursued them. There are secret stair-cases, the entrance to which scarcely any eye could detect, and places of concealment hollowed in the pillars of the edifice, where every thing appears as solid as if it were hewn out of the rock. Tradition asserts that persons by this means have been hidden here for days, and even for weeks together. The whole castle indeed is a labyrinth in which you would find nothing less than the clue of Ariadne necessary, to guide you through its windings.

We entered the suite of rooms. In each room, as our guide pointed out to us, beside

the door of entrance and exit, there were smaller doors, for the most part concealed behind the tapestry, which led to the secret parts of the building. The rooms themselves were in better repair than I expected, and bore marks of having been inhabited at no very remote period. There was plenty of old portraits, frowning in pride and lofty disdain, that hung against the walls; and, as our conductor had apprised us, there was no want of that cumbrous furniture, to which the nobility and gentry of a century or two ago had willingly accommodated themselves.

I was enchanted with all I saw. Here, thought I, is a place in which I might be concealed for ever, and from whence I might defy the malice of the most keen-sighted adversary. This castle is built on a spot so remote from public view, so difficult of access, and in its aspect so like an uninhabited ruin, that I might probably remain here for years, without any

persons approaching the place, except the obscure individuals who visit it with a view to the ordinary conveniences of its inhabitants. Even if it were entered by my most fearful adversary, nothing could be more easy than to baffle his search, and with the most ordinary precautions send him away no wiser than he came. Here I might enjoy my coveted obscurity, and enter myself a votary in the cave of oblivion. Every night I might lay myself down on my pillow without alarm, and every morning might awake to a day of sereneness and tranquillity. I might almost forget that I had an enemy, and that by one rash act I had cut myself off from the protection and alliance of political society. Oh, with how little might plain, unsophisticated man be contented! In my past life I have been for ever engaged in false refinements, for ever inventing some new subtlety, without the accession of which all my past pleasures appeared to me worthless and

nugatory. Now my happiness shall consist in the simple recollection, I am safe! This shall be a balsam to me every night, and a source of joyful recollection every morning. The consciousness of life itself, to a mind properly constituted, is a pleasure. And have I not besides the society of the person I most value in the world? Has she not devoted herself for me, and shall not this give me a value in my own eyes? Her innocence shall be an assurance to me that I am innocent, at least that I have still that within me which is worthy of an innocent attachment. From the beams of her eyes I will drink in satisfaction and peace. Have I not the means of subsistence? Are not my limbs active and free? Does not the same sun shine upon me as upon the rest of the world? Happiness is comparative. And, when I am disposed to repine, I will recollect all that I have now for months endured, and compare it with my present inviolable security.

CHAPTER IX.

But I was reckoning too fast upon my supposed advantages. They rested entirely on the arbitrary will of the man, who served us as a guide, and who seemed anxious to make us acquainted with all the resources and recommendations of his place of residence. How was I sure that he would be willing to enter into my views? He had the appearance of a sturdy, independent rustic; and such persons will often be found as great sticklers for their rights, as many of those who may seem to have much more valuable immunities to defend. He was a plain man, and likely enough to be contented with slender indulgences and luxuries. As I saw him, he

was master of every thing around him, and had no one to control him. But, if he were disposed to enter into my views, from a master he would be converted in some sort into a servant. I should occupy the choicest apartments of the castle; and it would become his duty to attend to my wants. The question therefore to be tried was, Would he prefer a simple, but sufficient mode of living, in which no man could say to him, "Do this; comply with my wants and caprices," and he was master of every thing he saw: or, was he a man accessible to pecuniary temptations, and who, for the sake of them, and the supposed advantages they would procure, would surrender much of the liberty he at present enjoyed?—I might however bring this matter to an immediate issue.

I see, my friend, said I, that you have many more apartments in this castle, than you have yourself occasion for. You in fact only occupy the vestibule, and leave the main part of the

edifice unused. May one, without fear of offence, ask you whether you would have any objection for an adequate consideration to yield to another the use of those apartments which at present are left unprofitable and idle?

I understand you, sir, said the *concierge*. You are enamoured of the solitude of my residence, and the many and unsuspected modes of concealment it affords.

I was struck with this reply. It seemed as if the stranger, all rustic and unpolished though he was, had the power of reading my thoughts.

That however, he continued, is nothing to me. I have something else to do, than to pry into other people's affairs. Provided the man with whom I deal is just to me, I do not enquire how he acts towards others, or into his past life. My scheme of morals is perfectly simple. It is all from man to man. What have I to do with mankind, with a mere abstraction, the creature of the fancy? I act justly towards every crea-

ture with whom I enter into any engagement. Previously to such engagement, we are both in a state of nature; and it is lawful for either to take such advantages as fall in his way. In our original state we are each of us for ourselves, uncontroled and at liberty. But, when I have entered into a voluntary contract with any one, it is my principle to be just to the minutest letter.

Thus much I have said, that you may understand my character at once, may know for what I give myself out, and in what points you may place a perfect dependence on me.

The fact is, that the lord of the castle allows me to live here rent-free, and is besides contented that I should make any advantage I can of the edifice, provided any one takes a fancy to reside in it. It is but a queer and uncouth sort of home, attended with many disadvantages, and where a man cannot be provided of even the necessaries of life without some forecast and

some labour. I am cut off from the rest of the world, have no social relaxations, and spend the evening of every day in cheerless solitude. But I do not much matter that. I have my thoughts to myself, and have no enjoyment of the noisy and riotous scenes in which so many other men place their delight. The lord of the castle is however aware that every man is not so solitary and savage as I am, and is therefore willing that I should take every fair advantage of my situation, find my account in it, and be the better reconciled to its inconveniences.

You may perceive that these apartments have not long been uninhabited. I rented them to a M. Brissac, a person in all likelihood in circumstances similar to your own. Worked up to desperation and fury, he had killed his elder brother, who by law had engrossed the paternal estate, and in addition to that had won the heart of the lady with whom M. Brissac was in love. These were in the eyes of the younger brother

satisfactory reasons why he should assassinate his elder; but they were not likely to be judged so by the laws of the country. M. Brissac fled. He came from the circle of Saxony to this place. He had heard of my castle, and judged that it would afford him the means of security. Our views coincided; and we speedily came to an agreement. Though he had fled hastily, he brought with him a sum of money sufficient for his subsistence for many weeks. He disbursed to me punctually; and I kept his secret, and supplied to him all he wanted. This was our contract. If his supplies had lasted longer, I should have continued faithful to him. But his hoard went on diminishing; and he did not seem to consider what a difference that made in his situation. He appeared to expect that I should go on the same, when the means of remuneration were at an end. Once and again indeed he told me that he looked for some recruit to his purse. But I perceived that that

was all a delusion. How could he be supplied, when he did not dare to discover his residence to a human creature? At length he fell into a state of total inactivity. You will allow that it was then time for me to look about me. There was a reward of a thousand ducats offered for his apprehension. If he had continued to pay me as at first, no power on earth should have induced me to break my bargain. But here was the criminal a gratuitous burthen upon me. If I had thrust him out on the world, he would have been helpless, and some stranger would have reaped the proffered reward. No; I knew better than that. I soothed him, and supplied him as long as was necessary with the utmost attention, just as I had done in the outset of our engagement. But I wrote to the proper parties in Saxony, offering, if I were secured of the ducats, to deliver him into their hands. They came upon him; they took him, when he was least aware that such a thing was in the

wind; and, about this time last month, he paid the penalty of his offence.

Thus, sir, I pass myself upon you for neither better nor worse than I am. My principles are sober and practical. And, in my opinion at least, such a man is much more to be depended on, than the men of high flights and romantic soaring, who tickle your ears and their own with swelling words, but who never talk any thing definite and to be understood. If you make a bargain with me, I will fulfil it on my part most scrupulously. But I give you fair warning that my execution of our contract will depend upon yours, and that, when our mutual advantage ceases, our agreement is at an end.

I was not ill pleased with the plain and, as I thought, sincere speaking of M. Jerome, the *concierge*. I did not entirely deceive myself in his character. I saw how exceedingly different he was from the persons with whom I had

hitherto associated, the friends of my choice. I saw how diametrically opposite his principles were to those I had hitherto cherished. There was nothing elevated in any of his notions. Every thing in his system of thinking had reference to himself; and he regarded nothing with approbation in the sentiments or conduct of other men, but in so far as he was or might be the better for it. Vice upon a general scale did not awaken his displeasure, nor virtue his complacency. But, strange as it may seem, this very circumstance contributed to my confidence in him. As he had no sense of general excellence, he had no motive to dress himself in false colours. All that he said of himself therefore that conduced to my purpose, I implicitly believed. He was a downright, "bold-faced villain:" there was "no falshood in him; he looked just what he was:" or, at least, such was my interpretation of his character.

Beside this, I certainly felt small pleasure in

being classed by him with M. Brissac, the fratricide, a man who, by Jerome's account, perpetrated a horrible crime from the most vulgar motives, and had not shrunk from the basest assassination upon his nearest alliance, so soon as his worst passions were thoroughly roused and in activity. He had in consequence, and worthily, suffered the last penalty of the law in the face of his countrymen; and his very remains were devoted to perpetual execration. I assuredly looked upon my offence in a very different light. The provocation I had received was of the deepest and most inexpiable sort. There was no mixture of depravity and vileness in what I had done; and, however the vocabulary of undistinguishing law might call my act and that of M. Brissac by the same name, I was fully convinced that a sound and discriminating judgment would place an eternal distance between them.

I felt in the mean time but too bitterly the

effects of the situation in which I was placed. I had forfeited all title to delicacy and refinement. No good, no honourable, no untarnished man would look upon me. I had cut myself off from my species; and my name was turned into an opprobrium. I must accommodate myself to my degraded situation. None but persons dishonoured like myself could be fit for my purposes. The narrow morality of M. Jerome seemed to me peculiarly adapted to the urgency of my situation. He had no fastidious purity, that should lead him to shrink from a man who had done that which should compel him to hide from his fellows; if the ministers of criminal law were on the alert for his apprehension, that was by no means a signal to M. Jerome to desert and abandon him to his fate. —Add to this, I was by no means in the condition of his late lodger, who, when he fled, had brought away with him only a certain sum, which was speedily exhausted. My revenues

were secure; and I had made such arrangements before I left England, as freed me from all apprehension of my supplies being cut off.

I therefore without delay came to an understanding with M. Jerome, giving him to see the advantage he proposed to himself, an ample compensation for his trouble, and yet not upon a scale which should shew me improvident, and reckless in the disposal of my substance.

In the mean while the feelings of Catherine were very different from mine. She was restless and uneasy in the presence of M. Jerome. She was all apprehension, and foreboded she knew not what of tragical and destructive. The simplicity of her nature furnished her with an index that revolted from the depravity of his. She felt a repulsion,—that they had nothing in common, that they were formed of dissimilar and contrary elements. The transparency and sensitiveness of her nature were at war with the hardness and brutality of his. The "pure and

eloquent blood that spoke in her cheeks," and told every thing she thought, and at the instant the thought occurred, was in diametrical hostility with the impenetrable darkness and obscurity of his. Every articulation in her frame was warm and alive; but his muscles were rigid and insensible like the limbs of one already dead. She felt for every thing that lived; but he felt only for himself. She had principles, which it was more than death for her to violate, something that did not depend upon an anticipation of consequences, that was original and primary in her, and which, though heaven itself were to tumble into ruins, she must still cling to. But with him nothing was sacred and inviolable; he brought every thing to the test of calculation, and chose it or refused it by the rule of what was to follow for his own advantage or disadvantage.

She trusted at once to the unerring suggestions of her spirit, while I entangled my-

self in the webs of a sophistry, which, though I felt it to be infirm and unsatisfactory, was powerful enough to delude me, and lead me a thousand miles astray from the sound and right-onward course.

I and my daughter therefore had a certain degree of animated contention, relative to my purpose of taking up my abode in the castle, and under protection of the *concierge*. She urged her objections with some warmth; for my safety and the end of all my precautions were at stake. But, having urged them again and again, she then felt it her duty to acquiesce and be silent. The affair was most truly mine; I had lived longer in the world, and ought to be a better judge than she of the character and motives of mankind; I was her parent, to whom she had been accustomed to look up for light and direction, when she had as yet neither observation nor experience to guide her; and now, that she was in many respects on a par with me,

the religion of deference, and the comparative fewness of her years rendered it impossible for her pertinaciously to contend with me. In spite of herself however she still retained a certain portion, shall I say of her suspicions, or of her convictions? She watched M. Jerome furtively; and she lay awake at nights stringing together her own conclusions, and thinking, if those conclusions were true, what he might still do so to put an end to our poor remains of security for ever.

The connection I had formed with M. Morlaix was particularly fortunate for me, as furnishing a medium for my obtaining supplies from England. He knew me by my real name. I had so arranged with my solicitor, that, wherever I might be, I should be able by my single signature, without specifying the place of my residence, to obtain from him supplies, as I might have occasion. M. Morlaix was not like me placed in a situation of peril, or

that demanded particular caution. All that was required of him by his government, was that he should on no account set his foot on the territories of France. I transmitted to him therefore from time to time draughts upon my solicitor in London. He had the kindness, sometimes with less trouble, and sometimes with more, to cause these bills to be regularly presented. Travers in one instance traced my connection with M. Morlaix; but it happened by some extraordinary good fortune, that this clue did not appear in his eye of any special promise; and he therefore did not for the present continue to pursue it. Jerome I was obliged to trust, to obtain my remittances from my friend at Bruges; my feigned name served as a passport between these two. I took care to make it worth while to Jerome, to take the two or three journeys to Bruges that were necessary during my residence at the castle. And, as I have already said, Jerome's morality

was of a peculiar cast. Though entirely selfish in his proceedings, he was in his own construction perfectly an honest man. He omitted no legitimate occasion of feathering his nest; he by no means based his conduct upon any principles of high honour; but he "held it for very stuff of the conscience" to be faithful to his engagements; he would not, at least such was his present proceeding, purloin a single farthing of that with which he was trusted, though "only the midnight moon and silent stars had seen it."

Alas, to how many perils was I exposed in spite of all my precautions! I intrusted both M. Morlaix and the *concierge* to a certain extent with my secret. With the vigilance of Travers and the advantages of Ambrose, I might expect every day to have my hiding-place and last refuge discovered, and myself exposed to the utmost malignity of my fate. I knew that my condition in the castle was to

the last degree insecure; and I could not find how to change it for a better. For some time I escaped unhurt: but at length this clue, as will afterwards be seen, led my pursuers to the very place of my retreat.

CHAPTER X.

MEANWHILE it was settled for the present between Catherine and myself that we should remain in the castle; and it became a question how we should dispose of our time so as to render its progress most agreeable, or its tediousness least annoying. We were cut off from the world; we had no outdoor amusements; no places of public resort to repair to; no neighbours with whom to maintain an interchange of visits. We were restricted from even almost all excursions without the walls of the castle; for, with the terrors that hung over me, I never thought our privacy could be sufficiently complete. It was no matter that we

were placed in a remote corner of the world, where strangers sometimes did not approach within ken of us for weeks together. If one stranger approached us, and if many weeks elapsed even without that, yet that one might be the individual whose observation would be most fatal to my peace. And then of what avail might be my multiplied precautions and my endless restrictions? Such were the miserable anticipations of a man like me, who by one lawless act had placed all that he valued at the mercy of others.

If I had been alone, and under these restrictions, I should undoubtedly have felt my time hang insupportably on my hands. My perpetual state of alarm would have made every instant susceptible, and inspired each, as it were, with a separate life, while my want of wholesome occupation, and of pursuits to beguile my time, would cause every separate portion to be felt by me as if it would last for

ever. This state of existence would have terminated in madness, or, if not in madness, in a heaviness and a torment that we may doubt whether the infernal regions could cope withal. It was now therefore that I felt what a benefit beyond the power of words to express, my daughter had conferred on me by the voluntary postponement of her happiness to mine, by her surrendering all her objects in life, and all her pride, to the securing my peace, as far as that was in her power.

I spent a few hours of every day by myself, nor was that arrangement without its gratifications, since I knew that this temporary sacrifice of the society of Catherine would have its reward in the inestimable pleasure of her presence and her communications. We found in a neglected corner of the castle a small collection of books, French, Spanish, German and Italian, and even a few of the classics; and these were an incalculable treasure to us. They

had been much neglected, and were in no very creditable condition: but what matter was that to us? We valued them for the stores of knowledge and entertainment they comprised. If they were ragged and dog's-eared, they did not the less present to us inestimable advantages. If they were every here and there maimed and imperfect, we attended, not to what we had lost by this, but to what we still possessed.

To the classical languages my daughter was a stranger, and it was an inestimable entertainment to us, the one to teach and the other to learn the inflections and idioms of these tongues, the one to explain and the other to apprehend the tastes and peculiarities of nations and classes of men long since extinct. We read much together; and, to those who have not tried it, it would be difficult to conceive the new sources of enjoyment that are opened by this mode of proceeding. There is no pleasure that is not damped and checked by

being reaped alone. To the solitary reader his books are indeed a dead letter. To feel that the conceptions and images imparted to the mind from the unliving and unconscious page strike at once on the sensorium of two, enhances the gratification tenfold. The eyes of both parties meet. A smile of approbation, or a glance of censure springs up on either side, and gives new life to their common occupation. We lay down the book; or we point to the page, and say, What means this? or, What ought we to think of it? The very idea, expressed in words, or only by an involuntary gesture, This is excellent; or, Is this altogether as it should be?—makes the proposition, the fact, or the sentiment, leap as it were from the insensible page, and become impregnate with life. When a difficulty presents itself to a solitary reader, he either slurs it over with indolence, or he investigates it with a sullen perseverance, stripped of the true

intellectual charm. But, when two persons bring together the force of their combined intellect, and contribute the stores of their several observation and experience, while even the difference of their humours and temperament sensibly adds to the light collected in the common focus, then the question is pursued honestly and in good faith, and neither party lays aside the weapons of his warfare, till he has achieved a common victory over the difficulty towards which their efforts had been directed.

But, if this is universally the case wherever two ingenuous minds unite in attention to one common theme, how infinitely were the zest and social enjoyment increased between me and my daughter! The sacred relation itself, when all minor circumstances and accompaniments are in harmony with it and swell the current of affection, mixes with every thought, and colours every sentiment. The mind of

Catherine was genuine, was pure, full of sensibility and taste. We were so accustomed to each other, that we did not fail to understand at half a word the sentiment meant to be conveyed. And yet sometimes the arch and pointed remark, the acute perception, and the deep and heart-felt impression would not be shut up in the compass of half a word or a whole one, but would overflow in an eloquent and well turned period, or would ever and anon burst forth with one phrase or sentence accumulated upon another, till the heart was eased, and the whole thought was adequately and powerfully conveyed. Sometimes too with our graver studies and more serious disquisitions we would intermix "grateful digressions, and solve high dispute" with sportive interruption, and affectionate caresses, such as might best beseem the father and his daughter.

While we were thus occupied I could not fail occasionally to contemplate Catherine with

an enthusiastic and a religious feeling, as the disinterested being who had discarded every thing for me, and who, while she might have been the ornament of drawing-rooms and palaces, uniting the admiration of the elegant and the high-born, was contented to inhabit a dilapidated ruin on a barren rock, having from day to day and from week to week no other society than that of her blasted, dishonoured, and outcast father. Yet she was contented; she did not cast back one repining thought; neither by look nor gesture did she betray the slightest consciousness of the unspeakable sacrifice she had made.

We had therefore no intervals of vacuity or spleen. Here, alone, and cut off from all the world, we found full occupation, and a delightful variety and succession of industry, earnest employment and amusing relaxation. But for the stings of conscience, but for a sense of degradation, and apprehension of the dark and

uncertain future, I could have been satisfied to have forgotten all the agitating, sometimes the delightful, sometimes the brilliant scenes of my past life, and to have been consigned to everlasting oblivion by all whom I had ever known.

We occasionally ventured, though at the same time sensible of the rashness of what we did, to quit the castle by a small and obscure door broken in the wall, and to wander among the rocks. This we did chiefly by night, assisted perhaps by the light of the moon and the stars. The situation was wild and romantic beyond conception. Every thing human was absent; every thing, except occasionally the bleating of the flocks, the song of the nightingale, the hooting of the owl, or the howling of the wolf. Here and there, particularly by moonlight, some ambitious point caught the brilliant radiance, or perhaps a long glen was illuminated with one breadth of light, while the depths not thus favoured had by contrast

an inconceivable, an impenetrable, and a wide blackness. At intervals we could observe the bright and silvery stream of the Rhine, that image of incessant life and silent solemnity, here and there but rarely interrupted by a skiff or a larger vessel, which did not fail to pursue its industrious course, shrouded as it was by the stillness of midnight.

I felt a strong repugnance to the idea of Catherine setting out on these excursions alone. There was unquestionable hazard in her venturing on the unevennesses and the ruggedness with which the rocks were every where interspersed; in addition to which I apprehended an impropriety in committing a frail and delicate female form, say by midnight, to the possible encounter of brutish hunger, or of lawless and desperate man. But, notwithstanding my precautions, she occasionally hazarded this dangerous achievement. Once or twice she took advantage of my being surprised with sleep in

my usual hours of wakefulness, and with agile steps and observant senses penetrated amidst windings, scarcely practicable to any but one so young and so fervent of pursuit. She had ever in her thoughts all that she feared from the duplicity and falseness of the *concierge*, and meditated how at worst we might escape from the bitterness and activity of his malice.

CHAPTER XI.

We had resided now some weeks in the castle, and had encountered nothing that should give us occasion of terror and alarm. I congratulated myself again and again upon the choice I had made of this obscure retreat, and began in some degree to lose sight of the apprehensions that had dogged me, ever since the fatal moment when I had surprised Margaret and her paramour together, and had taken upon him a sudden and an ample revenge. One morning, when I had hushed myself in security, and least of all anticipated any molestation, the *concierge* returned to the castle, after having been two hours absent upon his ordinary occupations.

He appeared to be in a state of considerable perturbation.

I am come, said he, that I may give you a timely warning. As I stood just now on the peak of one of the neighbouring hills, I saw a boat with five or six persons on board push into the cove below. This creek is scarcely ever entered, unless by such whose object is the castle of which I have the care. I suspect therefore that they are coming hither. I have always been aware, that the object you had in view in becoming my lodger, was concealment. What occasion you have for concealment it is none of my business to enquire. But, believing that this is the thing you desire, I should think that I failed of my part of the engagement between us, if I did not take every reasonable precaution that you should not be surprised against your will. As I told you at first, the castle affords a multitude of hiding-places, where those who chose it might remain in the

utmost security for weeks from the search of the most expert and practised discoverers.

I felt infinitely indebted to the *concierge* for his friendly concern. I cast a glance on Catherine, expressive of my triumph, and reminding her how much more correct I had been in my estimate of Jerome than she was. As the case stood, I felt that we could not do better than trust ourselves to the fidelity of our host. I told him at once that he was right in his conjecture, that concealment was of vital importance to me, and that I judged it by no means improbable, that the persons in the boat he had seen, were come hither for the purpose of my apprehension. I thanked him therefore fervently for his solicitude, and begged that he would point out to me the place of concealment that he conceived would best answer my purpose.

He immediately led me to a thick column sunk in the wall of my customary sitting-

room. He opened a door in this column, which was fitted so exactly that no eye, but of a person previously apprised of the state of the case, could have detected it. With a thin plate of iron, which he had in his pocket, and which he used something in the nature of a chisel, he caused this door to start open. It had hinges of a careful structure, which might be perceived on the inside, but of which there was not the slightest indication without. Within there were three ascending stairs, which led to a small apartment, with a recess to the right and left, something in the nature of an alcove, and a slight table. The room was imperfectly lighted from a loop-hole above, and in each alcove there was a bench, hollow beneath, and with a door so as to answer the purposes of a cupboard, calculated to hold a few necessaries or conveniences. There was a bolt inside the door of the apartment, to secure the persons within from any sudden invasion. We con-

veyed a small stock of provisions into this apartment, and prepared in all respects for a blockade. Having taken these steps, we waited in a sort of fearful tranquillity.

Jerome was right in his conjecture. The party that was approaching was led on by Travers. Determined and indefatigable as he was in his pursuit, he had essayed in a thousand ways to discover the place of my retreat. He had made experiment of both sides of the Rhine, but to no purpose. At length he returned to Bruges, where with no small difficulty he fully ascertained that I had taken up my abode for weeks. The description of myself and my daughter, with the accuracy which Ambrose was able to give it, served for a clue of no small efficacy. They discovered the village and even the house where I had taken up my residence. Travers made out, by a perseverance that scarcely any other person would have exerted, that the bookseller's shop

where he had first enquired respecting me, and the house of M. Morlaix, were almost the only dwellings in Bruges that I visited. He laid no great stress however on this circumstance, till one day that by an extraordinary accident he discovered that M. Morlaix had received a courier from London. This circumstance fixed his attention, and excited his suspicions. He knew, that the way for obtaining what he sought, was not to make enquiries of M. Morlaix, but by watching about his house to endeavour to acquire farther intelligence. He had some advantage for this purpose, as he and Ambrose could relieve each other in their task. At length Ambrose, who happened to be at that time on the spot, marked the person of Jerome, whose appearance was sufficiently singular to command his attention. The old man had the air of one entirely separated from the haunts of men, rustic and uncouth, and who seemed as if he had scarcely ever been in

familiar intercourse with his species. He went into the house of M. Morlaix, and in about half an hour came out again. There was that about him which said that he was a stranger, and that he was brought thither by an unusual errand. This happened on the third day after the arrival of the courier from England.

All these were but slight circumstances, but, in the absence of any thing more definite, and bent as these persons were to neglect no clue, they were sufficient to determine them to pursue the object before them to the end. Once and again they lost sight of their man, and lighted on him afresh; they lodged him in a little inn; and, choosing a convenient time when he was otherwise engaged, made some enquiries respecting him. Here they learned that he lived in quality of *concierge* at a ruinous castle twenty miles distant. They became informed of the story of M. Brissac, and received other intelligence, which added to the

apprehended value of the trace upon which they had got. Having obtained sufficient information, and a perfect direction to the castle where Jerome resided, they no longer judged it necessary to pursue him by sight, and avoided every thing that might awaken uneasiness within him. They repaired to the castle, and surveyed it on all sides. They chanced to encounter one of the hinds, who were in the habit of bringing provisions to the castle, and entered into conversation with him. He confirmed to them the story of M. Brissac, and added, that he believed there were new inmates in the castle, since the removal of that unfortunate person, as he found that Jerome required more provisions, and those of a somewhat more costly quality than he could otherwise account for. Putting these things together, and connecting them with Jerome's visit to M. Morlaix, and M. Morlaix's receipt of a courier from England, Travers fully persuaded

himself that he had at length ascertained the place of my retreat. He had accordingly left Ambrose on the watch, while he proceeded to the nearest municipality, to get his warrant backed by the local authorities, and to procure some additional force, that he might cut off from me the hope of resistance or escape. It was these persons whom Jerome had observed entering in a boat to the creek below. They landed in the cove, and were presently joined by Ambrose.

They assailed the gate of the castle with loud and thundering knocks. Catherine and I immediately withdrew into our place of concealment; and Jerome opened a wicket in the door, to enquire into the cause of so unusual a disturbance. One of the followers whom Travers had procured, and who was invested with the emblems of authority, exhibited to Jerome the warrant under which he acted, and said that they were come thither in pursuit of a murder-

er, threatening, in case of resistance or concealment, all the severities of offended justice.

Jerome perused the warrant attentively. He then said, It is true, there has been here for weeks such a person as you seek. He left this place only yesterday. I have more than once received persons who fled from civil justice. A variety of petty faults, a matter of mere miscalculation, adverse circumstances which no sagacity can foresee, and to which a man may be exposed without any moral delinquency on his part, may render an individual unable to encounter his creditors; and on such a man I have compassion, and am willing to shelter him from the relentlessness of law. I do not enquire of a person who seeks refuge within these walls what occasion he has for concealment; and, if I did, I should not be foolish enough to expect, in case that which reduced him to the condition of a fugitive was criminal, that he would confess so much to me.

The man specified in that warrant came to me under specious appearances, and I received him accordingly. By and by I felt that I had reason to suspect him of something worse; and I taxed him with my suspicions. He denied the thing stoutly; but there was something equivocal and unsatisfactory in his replies; and I warned him to provide himself with another lodging.

The officer in whose hands Travers had placed the warrant retorted upon Jerome. Friend, he said, you are not always so nice and distinguishing as you give yourself out to be. It is but lately that you harboured an unnatural monster who had murdered his brother. You sheltered him as long as you could make any thing of him; and, when the possibility of that was at an end, you betrayed and sold him to an ignominious execution. All this is upon record; and it is idle for you to suppose that we, whose business it is to inforce

the last awards of retributive justice, should be ignorant of what every one knows.

Well, well, replied Jerome, it do not signify our talking; and, for that matter, what you say only proves the truth of my story. I determined not to give refuge to a real criminal; and therefore, as soon as I found M. Brissac out, I took care to give him up to the due course of law. But it is no odds. Seeing you do not believe me, you may come in and look. I tell you there is no stranger within these walls, and that the man you seek bundled out no longer ago than yesterday.

The party then entered. They were diligent in their office. They looked into impossible places. They pulled about the furniture, and rummaged into holes and corners, chests and closets. They left the habitable part of the building, and sought into that which was decidedly in ruins. They clambered over the declivities, and searched among the caverns.

They at length returned to the apartment, in a column of which we were concealed, and where from our hiding-place we could hear every word that was spoken. They had employed successive hours in their inquisition: and Catherine and I remained in a vicissitude sometimes of apparent security, and sometimes of intolerable apprehension from the nearness with which they approached us. It was like the school-boy's game of hide and seek,—with this difference, that we played for every thing dear to us, for liberty, for life, for all those protracted horrors (supposing us to be discovered), which the hearer himself lifts up his hands at, and is astonished that human muscles and articulations can have the force to endure.

They now asked Jerome for some refreshment. That is a good joke, said he. If you would have taken my word at first, you would have saved yourselves all this labour. And now, that you have given me the most trouble

you could, you ask me to reward you.—He felt however that there was yet something to apprehend; and he believed that the best way of blunting and putting an end to their activity was by complying with their demand.

Travers was greatly chagrined with his disappointment. It was the confidence with which he relied on the result, that had led him to add to his force, that he might make assurance doubly sure. He lingered about the apartments, and by a vigilant application of his senses of seeing and hearing still hoped to baffle and overset the positive assurances of the *concierge*. Catherine and myself perceived the reluctance of our besiegers to break up their blockade, and were pursued with ever fresh alarms. At that moment a bar of no great weight accidentally dropped from my hand, and was heard without. Hark, exclaimed Travers, does that noise proceed from any one of our party? Jerome boldly said, It was

I, who dropped my pruning-knife; and at the same time he stooped, and pretended to take it from the ground. At length we overheard the enemy drawing off his forces, and unwillingly confessing the hopelessness of any farther examination. They rose together; and the coarser individuals of the party trod heavily along the floor with their jack-boots. They went out; and the wicket swung to its place. Jerome almost immediately approached the column, and said, They are gone; but remain close for a time; they may come back.

CHAPTER XII.

Subsequently we held ourselves the more secure for the ordeal we had thus passed. It was like a certificate of health in a city of the plague, or rather like a sign on the door of a house in a town taken by storm, to signify, Let no violence be done here; all within are friends! We therefore passed our days for some time in comparative peace; and we had a degree of reliance on Jerome, for he had been tried, and found faithful. Still Catherine retained her intuition: she could not deny that in this instance he had been found above reproach; but she looked in his face, and read there in cha-

racters that seemed evident and without ambiguity, cunning, treachery and falseness.

It was some weeks after this incident that I lighted, among the rubbish under a staircase, on part of a torn sheet of a Mercury, or a French periodical *brochure*. By what accident I know not, I took it up carelessly, and was going to throw it down again, when my eye suddenly caught the name, Deloraine. This was in probability nothing; the name itself was rather French than English; nor did it seem that it could have any relation to me. I glanced on it with a sort of indifference; but I did not throw it down; I read on.

To my utter astonishment I found that it was of the last interest to me. It purported to be the translation of an English narrative. I myself was the person to whom it specially related; the disaster that drove me from my country a fugitive, was its theme. But the events were so distorted by their pretended historian, and

the whole seemed composed with so diabolical a malignity, that I had a difficulty in supposing that the facts which had actually occurred, could have furnished the materials to so odious a misrepresentation.

It treated of a murder committed, as was affirmed, under circumstances the most aggravated and unparalleled. It described the murderer as a rich man above the middle of human life, who had bought an angelic creature in her teens, of her poor parents. The girl had previously been contracted, with the approbation of her father and mother, to a youth every way suitable to her condition. They were desperately in love. But an ungenerous advantage had been taken of the young man's being engaged in a sea-voyage, where he had been shipwrecked, and had met with many disasters. Part of these had been heard of by the parents, who nevertheless wrote to the young man, urging his speedy return, and assuring

him that they waited only for that, to make him supremely happy according to the forms of the church in his beloved. He arrived in England, with the assurance amounting to certainty, of being united to the mistress of his heart. All his sorrows, years of slavery, a shipwreck from which he had been saved only by miracle, were forgotten in this earnestly desired consummation.

In the mean time, the old Deloraine, with no feelings but for his own selfish gratification, had obtained in marriage this beautiful creature, the sacrifice to his unhallowed desires, and the grasping passion after wealth of her unfeeling father. The unhappy exile, upon his arrival, seeing the hopelessness of his situation, and resolved to immolate the sentiments nearest his heart to the slightest prospect of tranquillity and peace to her he loved, only sought a last interview that he might pour out the feelings of his bosom, and bid adieu to her for ever. This

consolation was denied him: denied by the obduracy of the jealous-pated fool, the husband; denied by the immaculate purity of the victim-wife. The exile however could not prevail on himself to forgo this last alleviation. An interview finally took place in all innocence; on the part of the lady, unexpectedly, without her concurrence and consent; on the part of the lover, in the spirit of an everlasting farewel. Meanwhile the tyrant-husband had his spies. He came upon them by surprise at the moment of their virtuous adieux, and, without allowing the unhappy lover an instant to put himself on his guard, or so much as to see his enemy, shot him at once through the heart.

Having executed this murder, the husband proceeded to load his despairing wife with foul language and the most virulent abuse. He charged her as to the last degree shameless and abandoned, swore that she should never again come under his roof, that he would never

allow a shilling for her subsistence, but that she should be turned out on the world to starve. The poor lady, seeing her lover dead at her feet, and weltering in his blood, terrified at the remorselessness of her husband, and feeling that she was without support and without hope,—her heart burst in twain, and she instantly expired.

To complete the tragedy, the poor father and mother, who without one feeling of remorse had sold their daughter, and who were now, when he saw all his views of selfish gratification frustrated, abandoned by the wretched miserly husband, at length became alive to the enormity of their proceeding. They could not shew themselves in public without being pursued with hootings and execration; the ghosts of their daughter and her lover were ever before their distempered imaginations; and a short month put an end at one and the same time to their miserable career.

Of this wide-spreading calamity Deloraine was the only author, and he alone came off with triumph. Had he fallen under the clutches of the law, his fate would have been at once inevitable and unpitied. Every court in the world would have held that he was responsible for four murders. The unhappy and exile youth he had slain in the most dastardly manner like a bravo; the unhappy lady by his brutality and the horrid suggestions of his tongue. The sight of the wretched lover killed in cold blood, with his wound streaming, at his mistress's feet, could not for a moment mollify his flinty heart. He seized the occasion of this miserable scene, of which he was the only perpetrator, to overwhelm the virtuous lady with the most heart-rending reproaches. Nor was he less the murderer of the misguided parents. He tempted them to crime, when they thought of nothing but good; and the consequence was their being hurried untimely to one grave. And yet this

man, the author of the mischief, came off with impunity. He was said to have hid himself in a foreign land, where he secretly revelled in the victorious contemplation of his unpunished crimes. But it was to be hoped that justice would yet overtake him in the midst of his imagined security. There is a God, whose eye is over all, and who in his own good time never fails to reveal the hidden things of darkness to the indignation of an exasperated world. Add to this, there was a person, the friend of the murdered lover, who had devoted himself to avenge the crime; and a reward of twelve thousand livres was offered for the apprehension of the murderer.

What a scroll was this to present itself to the eyes of me, the unhappy fugitive! The first thing that struck me in it, was the inconceivably distorted appearance that was here given to all the facts of the case. I knew that the world would be in arms against me for what

I had done; but, in the midst of all my calamity, I took this consolation to myself, that where the truth was known, and men were left to the exercise of their unadulterated feelings, I should be found less worthy of blame than of pity. And here I was painted as an unparalleled monster, heartless, selfish and sanguinary, totally indifferent to the sufferings of others provided my appetites were gratified, and triumphing in the midst of unheard of atrocities.

Meanwhile there was one thing in the midst of this mass of misrepresentations, that struck me, which might be true, and which had never occurred to me before. I had surprised Margaret and William together. I had seen in them the most unequivocal symptoms of an entire sympathy. I saw the eyes of my wife turned with unspeakable sweetness and delight upon the friend of her youth, her arms stretched out towards him, and seeking his embrace. I saw

him in ecstacy meeting these advances, forgetting all else in the world but the mistress of his soul. My contemplation of the two was but for a moment; but, in the then sharpened state of my faculties, I apprehended every muscle and every gesture; every hair almost told a several tale. Oh, if it had not been thus, could my heart in an instant have been freighted with inexorable vengeance! I read their guilt, their abandonment of all honour and principle, as plainly as if it had been written with sunbeams. This, in looking back on what I had done, was all the consolation that remained to me. I cared not for the world and its constructions. I felt in my heart that I was justified in what I perpetrated, and that I could have done no less. I knew that my act was in appearance black and inhuman, and that the undiscriminating vulgar would cry shame upon me. But my own heart acquitted me. Come what come might, as the

consequence of my action, I might lament the fatal necessity that urged me on; but I never could repent.

This paper, as I have said, first suggested to me a doubt of the all-sufficiency of the evidence upon which I had acted. When I went forth on the little journey which had preceded the tragical catastrophe, I believed that I had every reason to convince me that the survivorship of William was unknown to my wife. I had been absent only one night and a part of two days. Could it be that this short period had been used for the consummation of the most abandoned profligacy? Might not, after all, their encounter have been purely fortuitous? Every appearance indeed seemed to indicate a criminal understanding. But who could say what symptoms might occur even in the fortuitous encounter of two lovers, when one of them had been believed to be for years dead? And, if they had met in all innocence, if guilt had never entered

their hearts, if, as this paper affirmed, they had both of them resolved to sacrifice every weakness of their natures to the rigid rules of propriety and duty, then what name could adequately designate the iniquity of my deed, the deadly flagrancy of my offence? The very thought that it might be thus, was intolerable to me. It occasioned a total revolution in the system of my being. Hitherto, if I thought of William and Margaret in my dreams, amidst the watches of the night, I thought of them as delinquents. I was persuaded that they were criminal towards me, that they had surrendered every principle of integrity, that the consciousness of their fall from honour confounded them, and that they cowered before the resistless energy of my justice. Now, if I saw them in my dreams, I viewed in the countenance of each a look of unspeakable reproach, in Margaret that said, I have given up for you every thing that is valuable in life, I have repulsed

every whisper of human frailty, and behold my reward!—in William, that reproached me, first for having ravished from him a treasure that he valued more than all the world, and then that with a most dastard and cowardly act I had taken his life. I awoke in agonies. I could not sustain the passive reproachfulness of their looks; I could not sustain the bitterness of my remorse.

I asked myself, What means this paper? and by what accident or contrivance has it thus thrust itself on my notice? These questions remained for ever unanswered. The justice of heaven only must be accountable for the event. It could not have occurred through the instrumentality of Jerome. If he had seen the paper, if he had regarded it with a serious eye, if he had applied its contents to me,—though full surely he could have no cause to regard Deloraine as my name,—he would rather have secreted it from me, and have ruminated upon

its contents in the solitude of his own contemplations.—It was thus that I reasoned.

Though this however appeared to me the just inference from the phenomenon, I did not the less intently observe the motions and gestures of my host, that I might infer from them, if possible, what was silently working in his mind. It was all impenetrable. The brown and leathery texture of his skin, the stern inflexibleness of his eye, the bushy shagginess of his brow, and the invariable steadiness of his spirit, set at defiance every power of conjecture. Meanwhile, if there were any change in his demeanour, it was certainly on the favourable side. No doubt all his behaviour in the recent visit of Travers and his myrmidons was calculated to inspire me with confidence. His conduct throughout had been apparently frank and single-minded. He had given me notice of the approach of my foe; and all that he did was steady, resolute and unflinching. His subse-

quent proceeding was marked with a greater cordiality than before. It seemed to say, By this time we understand each other; and you must see that you have reason to rely on my constancy.

After much deliberation I shewed the paper that had fallen into my hands to Catherine. At first I seemed to feel some terror from the cunningness of its insinuations. But I said, No: surely my daughter knows me sufficiently; and I am myself at hand to clear all ambiguities. I was also originally unwilling to add new anguish to all that she already sustained on my account. But I presently saw the fallacy of these reasonings. The more she had sacrificed for my sake, the more unquestionably was she entitled that I should have no reserves with her. Beside, that I relied much upon the sagacity of her penetration. Innocence always has an advantage in that respect. Its eye is more steady, and its inferences more sound and dispassionate,

than those of one whose perceptions are disturbed by conscious guilt.

Catherine however was greatly disquieted with the perusal. She could not but be annoyed with the colours here put upon the conduct of her father. She had never regarded the deplorable violence that I had committed from the same point of view that I had regarded it. She had believed in the faultlessness and purity of her mother-in-law. She imputed no unprincipled profligacy to the unhappy stranger. She believed that all the provocation I saw, had been mere misconstruction on my part, an unhappy concurrence of circumstances which had supplied food for suspicion and jealousy, and had so rendered me desperate. She had not followed me, and devoted herself for my sake, because she considered me as "a man more sinned against, than sinning." On the contrary it was the gross error I had committed, the very enormity and unpardonableness

of my guilt, that had attached her to me, and made her feel that it was impossible for her to desert me in my complicated distress. But she could not bear to see all this set down in black and white. And least of all could she bear to see it maliciously aggravated, the worst construction put upon every thing, and views imputed to me the most foreign to my disposition and character.

And, in addition to all this, the paper gave her fresh uneasiness and impatience respecting our situation. She could not conjecture how it had found its way into our remote situation; but neither could she credit that it had not been seen by Jerome. Then the reward for my apprehension that it specified, was the very thing that, judging from the adventure of M. Brissac, was the most precisely calculated to seduce him. All her remaining serenity was dissipated under this apprehension. Day and night was she haunted with ten thousand nameless fears.

Catherine now pressed me anew to dislodge, and to seek another shelter. But I obstinately resisted her expostulations. I observed that, If I had previously conceived a confidence in Jerome, a confidence fully justified by the event, I was authorised in entertaining a still ampler confidence by what had recently occurred. We had found by actual experiment how felicitously the castle was adapted for secrecy, we had found Travers and all his myrmidons baffled. He had visited the castle, and by the fidelity of Jerome had been sent away, bootless as he came.

We accordingly still continued for one week and another without molestation. We fell into our usual occupations; and I could even perceive that Catherine, though still haunted with qualms and apprehensions, yet from day to day recovered a greater serenity.

In the course of the second week I was seized with an inflammatory distemper, which for two days confined me to my bed. By the

application of proper medicines however I recovered more rapidly than might have been expected. On the third day the weather for several hours had been insufferably hot, which in the afternoon was succeeded by a sober, heavy, perpendicular rain, giving a freshness to every surrounding object, and a remarkably exhilarating sweetness to the air. The evening after the rain was particularly beautiful, and irresistibly invited me to partake of its genial influence. The declivity of the rock caused the rain to run off immediately, so as to enable me to partake of the invigorating qualities of the shower without being exposed to any of its inconveniencies. Catherine however was that evening detained within the castle, about some trivial task which she was uncommonly earnest to finish. For my part I for the moment felt a gratification in being alone. A pleasing languor, the effect of my fever, the fever itself having vanished, hung about me; and I expe-

rienced that freshness of sensation, to which robust health is a stranger, and which comes over one like the inspiration of heaven, after a fit of sickness.

CHAPTER XIII.

I OPENED the small door broken in the wall which I formerly mentioned, and stepped out upon the rugged and irregular ground which forms the descent of the rock. I viewed the parting splendours of the closing day, already more than half extinct, and which every moment yielded a further step to the ashy tint of evening. A life-giving breeze played upon my cheek and my forehead. Presently the evening-star came, to assert its prerogative as precursor of the host of heaven. At that moment all grief, all sorrow, all remorse and reproach of things past, seemed to pass away from me. I

was like a new-born child, conscious only of internal sensation, swallowed up in the calm abstraction of existence. This did not last more than a quarter of an hour. But it was like a solitary green island, firm and immovable under the foot of the stranger, in the midst of the never-reposing waves of a tumultuous sea. I gave myself up to it; and it seemed an earnest of everlasting existence.

When I woke from this delicious reverie, I found that I was still almost under the walls of the castle. I had perhaps neither moved hand nor foot from its commencement to its close. I had previously proceeded in an oblique direction, and now perceived that I was rather under the northern than the eastern aspect of the castle. I applied myself to regain the door by which I had left its walls. In attempting to accomplish this I made a small circuit of a part of the fortification. It was now almost

totally dark; and every thing was as still as death. The ground I trod was of pulverised earth, and my steps were soundless.

I approached a buttress; and, as I approached, could hear the sound of human voices on the other side. I paused for a moment from an impulse of curiosity, and thinking whether the subject of their talk could possibly have reference to me. They conversed in somewhat of an under-key, as men almost always do when their talk is in the nature of conspiracy, even though there should be not the smallest probability of their being overheard. The buttress however was a convenient screen for me, enabling me to advance almost close to the speakers without the risk of being perceived. The evening was remarkably still; so that scarcely a syllable could be uttered by either, without its being conveyed to my ear.

I would not, said Jerome, have thought of a thing of the sort, if it had not been for that

paper. But I never heard of any thing so cold-blooded and atrocious as this man; and I shall feel that I have done a meritorious act by ridding the earth I tread, of such a villain. There can be no mistake of this being the very man?

I am sure of it, replied the other. I came from England for the very purpose of apprehending him. But, if not, there is no harm done. I want Deloraine, and him only. I bear no animosity against any other living mortal. If I find that this is not Deloraine, I will not hurt a hair of his head.

I should be mainly sorry to be wrong. I stand upon my character, and would not but be faithful to the very letter of my engagement, to any thing that deserved the name of a man.

But where is he? He is harboured in this very castle.

I will not tell you where he is. He is not far distant; and I can presently put him into

your hands. But, without my aid and consent, you can never meet with him. He is as safe, as if he were hid in the bottom of the sea. But you are sure the reward is twelve thousand livres? I could not take a farthing less.

You may depend upon it. Give yourself no uneasiness. But lead me to him. Do not trifle time.

Soft you, sir. Where is the cash? I must see it. You must count it out to me. I depend upon no promises. I have nothing to do with paper. Gold, and gold only, can make me stir a step.

You shall have it to-morrow. But in the mean time let us secure his person. I count every minute an age, till I have him in my hands.

Excuse me; but you shall have no performance to-day, to be paid for to-morrow. What do I know of you, Mr. Travers, or whatever may be your name? You may be as much to

be relied on as the bank of Amsterdam, or you may be a man of air, to be puffed away with a breath. No, sir; I am not to be had so.

Well then, said Travers. I will go to the nearest free-town. It is but a few miles. I will be with you by ten to-morrow. But in the mean time, if the criminal should escape?

Be under no concern about that. I am an old bird; and not to be caught with chaff.

Farewell then: remember ten.

At ten I am yours. The dial is not so sure to the sun, as I am to be on the spot, and in all readiness.

Saying thus, they parted; and I was left in silence and solitude.

What were my feelings in having overheard this conversation? My blood tingled: every atom and fibre within me had a life of its own. Here I stood on the brink of destruction. All my precautions, all my anxieties were dissolved, like "a thread of tow, when it touches

the fire." I felt already as if the iron, which dispassionate and ice-blooded policy has hammered out, had embraced my ancles and my wrists. I did not so properly anticipate, as pass through, my apprehension, my being embarked for England, thrust into a post-chaise between two thief-takers, and delivered up to the jailor, the bars of my dungeon, the dock of the session-house, and all the dreadful formalities which are concluded with the scaffold and the gallows. By how rare an accident had I sallied out alone at the small and obscure door of the castle, and approached the buttress at the very moment to hear what I had heard! And, but immediately before, I had rocked myself in the most unsuspecting security, a security which is perhaps always the precursor of the hurricane and the earthquake.

I re-entered the castle by the door by which I had quitted it. Is it not strange?—Here dwelt the Judas, that had sworn to deliver me

up to assured destruction, and I placed myself consciously, and with my eyes open, within his walls. What could I do? I could not fly wholly unprepared and naked. I could not leave my vowed and devoted companion, my daughter, to encounter a host of traitorous foes, in utter ignorance of what was become of her father. What would be her feelings? I could not bear to anticipate them. Least of all could I bear, of deliberate purpose, and by voluntary election, to cast upon her such a consummation of her generous and disinterested labours. Where, if I left her now, was I to find her again? How communicate to her the intelligence which most of all she valued, What was become of her father? her worthless father, the pest of the earth, the blight and the curse of her invaluable existence?

I entered the apartment, where sat Catherine, having just completed the task she had prescribed herself. She looked up, and saw im-

mediately the tokens of the extraordinary revolution that had passed within me. I said:

Catherine, there is but a step between me and death. Travers was this moment at the castle. Jerome has agreed to give me up. All that you suspected, all that you feared, is realised.

I told her every thing I had heard, that Travers had gone, to be here again at ten in the morning with the promised reward, and doubtless with such a reinforcement as to make my escape impossible. Knowing this, I had returned into the lion's den, and placed myself within his fangs, rather than subject my child to all she would have felt at the disappearance of her father, and not knowing what had become of him.

Catherine was cruelly shocked at the intelligence I brought her. The effect however was somewhat diminished to her by the circumstance of her being always suspicious and

on the alert, anticipating what had now actually happened. Add to which, her spotless soul and her well-balanced mind gave her at all times unspeakably the advantage of me. We felt at once that it was necessary for us to conduct ourselves just in our usual manner, and not to take the slightest step, till Jerome had retired to rest, and we had reason to conclude him already in the arms of sleep. We counted the clock; we watched the minute-hand; and we said, So many hours, and quarters of an hour, and our oppressors will be upon us. We might have retired into our hiding-place, and have shot the bolt; but Jerome knew every nook and recess of the castle, and all our precautions would have been unavailing.

We had nothing for it but to get out of the chateau by the same passage by which I had just entered it, and which was used by no one but ourselves. It fortunately happened, as I

have already said, that the apartments of the *concierge* were detached, and at a distance from those we occupied. He came to us before he retired to rest, said he was glad to see I was better of my fever, and wished us a good-night. As he shut the door after him, I heard a slight sound, which could scarcely be that of a bolt. I dared not try the door immediately; and the impression was so inconsiderable, that the minute after I had forgotten it.

After a brief pause, we put together a few necessaries, and the little provision of money we had by us. We waited more than an hour and a half till the dead of the night. I then went to the door of our apartment leading into the hall, and was petrificd at finding that it was locked on the outside. I now for the first time recollected the brief and uncertain sound that had immediately succeeded Jerome's departure.

Here then, at least as our jailor believed, we

were secured, shut up as in a pen, or like wild beasts in a cage, helpless and without resource, till it should please him to open our place of confinement, and deliver me up at once into the hands of my destroyers

Meanwhile, after a short interval of amazement and despair, I began to cast about what was to be done. I had still a respite of some hours, of which, in time at least, if not in space, I was absolute master, and during which no one would contravene me, or endeavour to interfere with my movements.

I had had the apprehension of my fate at all times before me, and had provided myself with the little implements that might be necessary to free me from obstacles not exactly to be calculated on. Among them were several of the tools of a carpenter. With these I applied myself to the lock of the door. It was strong, and of considerable dimensions; and the years which had passed since it was placed there,

and the rust it had contracted, rendered its removal an affair of considerable difficulty. After repeated exertions however, and being more than once obliged to pause in my labour, I conquered the obstacle, detached the lock from the wood-work of the door, and having forced it from its horizontal position, no longer found any impediment to my reaching the steps that descended into the hall. The distance interposed between the spot where I had been at work, and the apartment of my jailor was a most fortunate circumstance. With cautious and wary steps we went down into the hall. All was perfectly still. We had hitherto been lucky enough to occasion no alarm.

After a minute's pause we proceeded to the small door broken into the wall, which once passed we should find ourselves beneath the canopy of heaven. I had brought with me a little lamp to direct my steps. I had taken the precaution to close again the passage lead-

ing into my apartment. The outer door was just as I had always found it, secured with two light bolts. They were easily pushed back. We went forth, and found the air of heaven breathing upon us. This was in truth the having carried a great point, and the feeling of the breeze was for the moment the presage and assurance of freedom and a security from harm.

CHAPTER XIV.

It was now that the solitary observations and rambles in which Catherine had occasionally engaged, were brought into use. She had found a path at the bottom of the declivity, little frequented indeed, but which ran round a part of the mountain on level ground, and which it was to be presumed led to some practicable route. Other sheep-tracks there were in sufficient numbers, which seemed promising in the beginning, but which speedily lost themselves, and only served to mislead the person who should venture on them. We descended the rock with wary and cautious steps, aware of the point we were desirous to

reach. We came to the path of which we were in search. This presently divided into two, the one continuing along the roots of the mountain, the other diverging into the open country. We pursued the last. Our object being to place our followers, if followers we had, at fault, we adopted in preference the direction which it might seem beforehand the least likely we should have adopted.

By break of day we observed an obscure village at no great distance from us. We were somewhat weary from the length of way we had measured, and were glad to resort to a place which seemed to promise us some refreshment and rest. We purposed to enter the obscurest public house, or *cabaret*, for that purpose. We were no sooner however in the street, if a few mean and scattered cottages might deserve the name, and were passing certain sheds, which the villagers perhaps dignified with the name of a market-house, than

we perceived from ten to twenty persons gathered together in a sort of commotion. A cry was presently raised, "Stop him! stop him! there is the felon."

The words struck us both at the same moment. A secret consciousness brings a thing home to the individual, and is no less powerful to oppress and dismay than the voice of a trumpet. I did not doubt that I was pursued, that I was indicated, that I was on the point to be apprehended. I looked round me in the deepest confusion. Despair entered my soul, sharp as the point of a sword. I said to myself, Every effort I make is vain: the decree of heaven is gone out against me; and what heaven ordains, it finds its own means of carrying into execution!

Catherine recovered sooner than I did, and immediately exclaimed, I will go and see what occasions this uproar. It may be nothing to us.

I grasped her arm in a significant manner, and held her back. If this clamour is pointed at me, I cried, every thing is at an end. Meanwhile do not force these persons to attend to us! I felt at once, that, when a cry is raised against any one as an offender, no matter whether it is a murderer, or one whose only crime is the picking a pocket, the whole body of vulgar bystanders are in arms against him, are ready to intercept his flight, and feel like so many sworn constables, whose function is the summary execution of the law.

It turned out that the object of the clamour was a man charged with having stolen a horse. The man was innocent. It happened, as is so often seen in these cases, that a forward and confident fellow, who in his life never knew what it was to doubt of any thing he had taken in his head, saw something in the air, the features, the complexion, or the demeanour of an individual, whose whole life was peaceable, and all

his thoughts inoffensive and blameless, authorising him in his opinion to swear to his identity with a desperate ruffian, whose only mode of subsistence had habitually been the daringly appropriating to himself the chattels of others.

We took some refreshment in the *cabaret* I have mentioned, and then, wandering into certain fields, at a distance from any public road, seated ourselves in an obscure and well-shaded nook, with the design of considering what it would be advisable to do next. We canvassed various projects; but the more maturely they were considered, the less did any of them appear to afford a reasonable ground of hope. Travers was so indefatigable, so resolute in pursuing his purpose in defiance of discouragement, so qualified in point of expenditure to execute whatever his thoughts suggested to him, so subtle in recovering and following up every scent that was afforded him, and, above all, was so deeply imbued with the passion of

thoroughly avenging his unfortunate friend, that never-ending terror seemed to dog my footsteps, with the assurance that, however often I escaped him, I should infallibly be caught at last. Had such a contest any temptation in it, that should lead me to continue it further? Assuredly not. Had it not been for the thought of Catherine, and what she would endure from the disgrace, perhaps the ignominious fate of her father, I would immediately have surrendered myself to my country and its laws, with the possibility that the issue might not prove the worst that my fears suggested; but if it did, that I might at least arrive at an undoubted end, close this feverish state of intolerable existence, and finally lay down my head in the silence and insensibility of the grave.

CHAPTER XV.

For the sake of Catherine there was still one experiment that I was contented to try. And this was how far, by a well concerted enterprise, I could divest myself of the indications of my identity so completely, that I might face my enemies, and appear in the midst of them without danger of deing detected. I had heard, and I believed, that such an experiment had been made, and with success. The most striking examples of this that have hitherto been known, have been of persons happily endowed, either in bodily conformation or intellectual temperament, for the purpose, who, in mere wantonness and the pride of what has been

supposed an unique talent, have imposed successfully upon those to whom they have been familiarly known, nay upon their most intimate and sacred connections, satisfying them that they were the strangers they pretended to be. But, if this has been done in sport, and for the mere exhibition of superior skill, sometimes perhaps solely for the amusement and wonder of a convivial party, who were several of them in the secret, why should I suppose that, when life and fame and all that was dear to me were at stake, when the alternative was a dungeon, public conviction before a court of justice, and an ignominious execution, I could not be equally adroit, persevering and successful? I had heard one of the persons most renowned for this sort of experiment say, I would undertake to keep up this disguise for any length of time; I would go though France and Switzerland, not less successful and triumphant at the last stage of my journey than at the first.

This is certainly a wonderful speculation. The moral government of man in society to a great degree hinges upon the question of identity, in other words, that every man is recognisable by his fellows. The system of the world is such, that, amidst the thousands of millions of human creatures that inhabit this globe of earth, each one is individualised by his features, his figure, his carriage, his voice, and a multitude of almost unassignable particulars, so that he is at once identified by the most superficial observer. There is something in the outline and carriage of every man, by which he does not fail to be singled out and challenged by his acquaintance, as far as he can be seen. The distinctions are subtle, and, as we might at first think, in a manner undefinable, yet are such as to answer every practical purpose. Were it not for this, what would be the moral and civil government of mankind? There may perhaps be persons so firm in rec-

titude, that, if no human creature were privy to their offence, if only "the midnight moon and silent stars had seen it," they yet would not endure the consciousness of their own degradation. But the mass of mankind are not thus constituted. They are held in awe by the opinions and censure of each other. Reputation is the breath of their nostrils, the element by which they respire. The construction that shall be made of their proceedings is the thought that awes them; and even the judgment they shall make of themselves is regulated by the judgment of their neighbours. We are members of a community, and can be scarcely said, any one of us, to have a rational existence independent of our fellows. And, if this is the case in comparatively trifling particulars, and what may be called the minor morals, how much more essential will it be found in those weightier matters by which society is prevented from alling into anarchy and barba-

rism? Who can tell how few are those individuals who would be withheld from invading the property of others, infringing their freedom, or breaking into the chamber of their lives, were not the rest of mankind set as it were as a watch upon their actions, and did they not severely retaliate, by legal proceeding or otherwise, upon the aberrations of the transgressor?

Such however is the constitution of things in the globe we inhabit, that the law of the social intercourse of man will in almost all cases proceed with regularity. Few men have the power, and still fewer will believe they have the power, of imposing upon their fellows by the obliteration of their identity. An imposition of this sort implies such a tax upon the impostor, as would require him to suppress all the spontaneous suggestions of his soul, to put off his nature, and to act under a perpetual restraint. A man must be held under the terror of an alternative no less awful than that of life and

death, before he can prevail upon himself for a continuance thus to divest himself of nature, and become the mere creature of art.

It is true that I was placed in a tremendous emergency, and was driven by the most distressful considerations to make an election of the conduct I should hold in my present situation. Yet my mind was essentially reflective, and I could not refrain even under these circumstances from speculating upon the principles of society, and the laws of morality to man. It was necessary for me however to put a speedy end to this digression, and to plunge again into the stream of action in which I had been hurried on, ever since the fatal morning in which I had taken away the life of William, and quitted for ever the mansion in which I first drew the breath of existence. Involved in this stream, I should never be my own master for a moment, could never act from any genuine impulses, or launch into a free and generous course, but must ever-

more be driven, compelled to regulate my proceedings by the dark and perplexing anticipation what would be the proceedings of my enemy. Indeed both parties in this unnatural contest are chained down to a perpetual dependency, each speculating what would be the conduct of the other, the one having for his object to surprise and to capture, and the other to elude and escape.

I resolved however upon a totally new mode of proceeding. For a considerable time it had been my ruling purpose to make the place of my concealment unknown, either by putting it at a distance wholly remote from the point to which suspicion or sagacity should direct my pursuer, or by so covering it from the discovery of the keenest sight, that the pursuer might cross it a thousand times without so much as conceiving that he approached it. This was slavery. It was attended with momentary and incessant terror. The individual who acts on

this design, should be able to creep into indivisible space, or to make himself penetrable, and impalpable to human touch or sight. It would be a very different thing, if I could boldly face my pursuer, and say to him, I am not the person you suppose me to be. The more narrowly you survey me, the more will you be convinced of your error. Or rather, if, preventing the very thought, I could, by first perplexing the senses of the observer, and then carrying him away with an audacious composure and incredible presence of mind, at once impose myself upon him for a stranger whom he had never seen before.

In execution of this plan I deemed it necessary immediately to pass over to England. This I did not doubt I could easily accomplish, as it would necessarily throw out in their calculation those who sought me, who would look for me in any other direction, and never believe that, by voluntarily repairing to the country

where my offence had been committed, I should apparently shorten their labour by taking half their business on myself. The advantages I should purchase in England, when I was once there, are obvious. In the disguises it was my plan to assume, in the transmutation of myself into the person of another, it would be most essential that I should possess a perplexing fluency of speech, the most copious variety of brogue and intonation, and all the subtle shades of difference in the modes of expression used by persons in one profession and walk of life and another.

I had arranged these particulars of my scheme, and had already set out on my journey, using all the precautions of obscurity and circuitous routes which my terrors suggested, when to my utter surprise I encountered, in one of the first towns of Holland I came to, that young man, mentioned in an early part of my narrative, from whose kindness I reaped

such essential benefit in my state of widowhood after the death of my first wife, and when I was slowly recovering from an obstinate typhus fever, which had reduced me to the brink of the grave. I there related that this young man, whose name was Thornton, had been the son of one of my earliest friends. I stated that he accompanied me, in my journey for the reestablishment of my health at that time through several counties of England, and proved the most accommodating companion in the world. He was all gentleness, all vigilance, and of the sweetest temper imaginable. When I was disposed to retire into myself, he took care not to disturb me. When I shewed indications of a frame inclined to communication and amusement, he had a particular adroitness in accommodating himself to my humour. He could talk of poetry, of history, of scenery, of arts, and the world. His society had done me a world of good, and I never tired of it.—Such

was the man, whom, as I have said, I suddenly and without the smallest preparation lighted upon in one of the small towns of Holland, at no great distance from Nimeguen.

I had just set my foot upon land from an insignificant shallop, and was hurrying with Catherine into a *cabaret*, when I caught sight of him. I had my hat, as usual, pulled down over my eyes, and my cloak close muffled about my neck, that I might the better pass without notice. Thornton however instantly recognised me, and, finding that I was about to pass as if I had not seen him, pulled me by the cloak. I would have shaken him off, but I could not. I perceived that he knew me, and therefore, after a moment's hesitation, judged it most prudent to change a few sentences with him. My recollection of his exceeding humanity and kindness to me on the occasion I have mentioned, rendered it impossible for me to treat him with hardness and disdain. And I believed that his temper

would not allow him to make himself a means of injury to me.

I drew him into the *cabaret*, and, having seen Catherine safely housed, accompanied him into a private corner of the yard annexed to the inn. I said:

Thornton, I suppose you cannot be unacquainted with my unfortunate situation. I am an exile and a fugitive. It is as much as my life is worth, to be known to any one. Why have you been so imprudent as to speak to me? But I know that I may trust you, and have therefore only to intreat that you will on no account open your lips respecting me, or intimate to any one that you know whether I am dead or alive.

My dear Deloraine, answered the young man, how could you imagine that I would injure you? There is scarcely the person in existence to whom I am so much attached as yourself. I received you as a legacy from my father, he and

you having been old friends. From childhood I regarded you as nearer to me than many relatives. The month that I spent in your sole society in travelling, when you were just escaped as by miracle from the doors of the grave, gave an additional sacredness to my sentiments towards you. I gazed on you with intentness from the first, when the colour of your skin was dark and inky, and you looked rather as if you had been a corpse newly dug out of a grave, than a living man. I watched you when the fresh breezes of the spring fanned your cadaverous lineaments, gradually restored you to the congregation of living men, and from time to time brought a faint red into your colourless cheeks. I left you at Harrowgate to a great degree restored; and I visited you repeatedly afterwards, when you married a second time. It gave me delight to see you, as you grew as it were young again, and were reinstated in your primary robustness and contentment. But, oh,

how are you altered now! How much more fearful and pitiable is your appearance! In your valetudinarian journey you were feeble and languid, with a sort of premature old age; but you were resigned, and displayed no tokens of inward disquietude and contention. Now you are fleshless and emaciated: but that is not the worst. Your countenance is haggard; your eyes are roving and wild; you seem for ever to be looking for something, which, though you do not see, you apprehend; you are always uneasy, haunted with terrors, appearing like one that has done some terrible thing, the recollection of which he cannot endure.

And have I not occasion? replied I. You speak as if you were not aware of the terrible revolution that has overtaken me, casting me down from a station which the mass of my species might envy, and rendering me an object of universal execration and abhorrence.

Thornton expressed himself towards me with

a kindness and unreserved sympathy, which I had experienced in no human creature, from the hour that I took an everlasting leave of the halls of my ancestors. This kindness had the effect of opening my heart, and healing for a moment the wound in my bosom. I had no longer any reserve with the young man, and led him at once to the apartment in which I had left my Catherine.

Here he explained to us the particulars of his present situation. He had come to Holland to reap the succession of a near relation of his mother, a citizen of that country. He had now completed the business on which he came, and was on the point of returning to his native residence in the county of Essex. Won by his friendship and cordiality, I disclosed to him my new project, so far as related to the putting an end for the present, and as I believed for ever, to my wanderings as an exile, and taking my chance of concealing myself, perhaps as effec-

tually, in England. Thornton did not exactly understand by what process of reasoning I was led to this conclusion; but he regarded my design with a certain complacency, inasmuch as it afforded him a prospect of being further useful to me. He had a small vessel lying at Helvoetsluys in readiness to transport him to Harwich, in which if I would consent to embark, I should be more secure from the inquisition of idle or curious persons, than I could have the hope of being by any other means. I consented to his proposal; and my consent gave him unequivocal pleasure. We planned that he should go on before, to have every thing in readiness, and that Catherine and I should follow obscurely, and with such precautions as unfortunately we were too much under the necessity to practise. Every thing happened as favourably as we could have wished; and we had the advantage to embark without obstacle or accident.

CHAPTER XVI.

We hastened to the paternal residence of Thornton in the hundred of Tendring, remote from any public road, but lying in a bird's flight nearly in the middle, a little however to the south, between Harwich and Colchester. It was a low and ancient building, embosomed in trees, so as to be nearly invisible, till you came somewhat abruptly upon an obscure avenue leading immediately to the door of the house. It had battlements, and a dry ditch, which had formerly been a moat. Scarcely any one ever approached this residence, unless persons who had express business with its inhabitants, either tenants to the lord of the

manor, or persons from the nearest town who supplied them with such provisions as were not the growth of the soil. Visitors there were few; for the young man had but lately come to the estate; and, almost ever since he succeeded to the property, he had been absent on the continent, in Holland, and elsewhere. The extreme obscurity and solitude of the mansion were inexpressibly soothing to me; and the kindness of the owner was balm to my hurt mind, and a draught of the most salutary nature, bringing at least a temporary oblivion to my woes.

Thornton was incessant in his efforts to reconcile me to myself. He said, Nothing could be more unjust, than to impute any thing criminal to me, or that I should take remorse to myself, for the unfortunate deed I had perpetrated. The man I killed was undoubtedly the object of the first passion of my wife, the only person that had awakened in her the genuine

sentiment of love. How they came into the situation in which I found them, had, he understood, been disputed. It was however undeniable, that they were swallowed up in each other, forgetful of all other considerations, and this not in a corner, but in the open face of heaven. This spectacle presented itself to me on my approach to my own house, after the absence of a day and a night. I could not have been a man, if I had not been transported out of myself at the sight. There was no time for deliberation, not an inch of place given for the exercise of the freedom of will. The act was an irresistible necessity, and flowed from an uncontrolable impulse. There was no alloy of malice or forethought. It had in it no mixture of infirmity or weakness, but merely stamped me a man in the truest and most honourable sense. If such then was the just description of the deed, no unfortunate consequence that followed upon it could alter its

nature. If the same act that took away the life of her paramour, also brought to a premature close the existence of Margaret, if ultimately it hurried to the tomb her unfortunate parents, still the cause remained the same. It is weakness and folly, to judge of an act by its collaterals and consequents. I had been guilty of no atrocity. My mind was spotless. From my youth upward I had been without a fault. My dispositions had been such as to engage every one that knew me to love me. And it was absurd to suppose, that one deed, and that sufficiently justified by circumstances, and in fact unavoidable, should involve me in the bitterness of self-condemnation and hatred, or render me a fit object for the unfavourable verdict and hostility of my fellow-men.

It was thus that Thornton, in the generosity of his soul, and the tenderness and affection of his spirit, sought to appease the deadly shock I had received. And it was so new to me to be

treated with kindness, and sympathy, or with an approbation however qualified, by any one but the dear relative who had devoted herself to my consolation and aid, that it breathed as it were a new life into my dry bones. I walked up and down in the saloon of my friend, and felt myself at home. I cast my eyes on his servants, without seeing one individual who looked askew upon me, who had heard a syllable whispered to my disadvantage, or of whom I could form the imagination that he would betray me. [There was, as will appear hereafter, one exception to this.] I was in a new world. I was as if I had at last come ashore in a remote island in the Pacific Ocean, where every thing talked of calm and repose, where all the inhabitants were innocent, affectionate and confiding, and entertained not a doubt that I was as spotless as themselves. I had left my adversary on the banks of the Rhine, prying narrowly into every corner of the castle of the *concierge*, and re-

maining, as I trusted, without a hint that should lead him to suspect that I had crossed the North Sea, or had conceived the audacious and desperate project of voluntarily returning to my native country, the very country whose laws I had so grievously offended. Thus for a few days I felt myself lightened of the oppressive weight, which I had been condemned to carry about with me by day wherever I went, and which lay on my breast during the night watches, rendering my respiration tormenting and laborious.

It was not that I was for a moment deceived by the generous sophistry of Thornton. I knew the condition under which man is permitted to subsist on the face of the earth. I knew that the state of a moral being admits not of an excuse founded on the idea of his being hurried into an act pernicious and destructive, without the power of resistance. This doctrine I was well aware would open the door to endless and profligate abuse. An accountable creature must

learn to be watchful over his steps, to be distrustful of himself, and to be at all times upon his guard as against an enemy eager to lead him astray. He must subject his passions to the great law of moral right, and must never relax the reins of his conduct. He must at no time take a specious excuse to himself, or allow himself to varnish over his faults and his follies. It is incredible how much may be effected by a habit of vigilance and distrust; and he who does not practise this habit, must expect to fall into deplorable and unpardonable errors. He who allows himself to talk or to dream of a resistless temptation, by so doing enters at once in the catalogue of living beings for a beast, rather than a man.

It is thus in reality that every one is judged by his fellow-creatures. The offender may seek to delude himself with an effeminate and poor-souled excuse; but it is not so that a just and enlightened by-stander will pronounce upon

him. Atrocious deeds are atrocious, however circumstanced and however qualified. He who, without being absolutely called upon in self-defence, imbrues his hands in blood, is a murderer, and stands responsible for the consequences of his deed, be they never so multiplied and tremendous. He is cut off from the society of his fellow-men, and marked as an object to be shunned, to be hated, to be reserved for exemplary punishment.

And, were it otherwise, what sort of consolation would it be to a being of any spirit, and with one sentiment worthy of a man about him, to say that this individual, being too weak, too void of all firmness and self-government, to be subjected to the general law of his kind, must, like a lunatic, or like an outcast drifted off to sea without compass or rudder, be held excused for a breach of those orders, which foresight and good-sense, in possession of the instruments that a state of civilization would supply, would

have imposed on him? This is the true alternative to which a human creature, who by his form is understood to be endowed with reason, is subjected; and the man who does not feel himself "punished with a sore distraction," would perhaps rather undergo the ignominious treatment awarded to a felon, than be counted a cipher in the community of men, and excused as a creature destitute of the higher faculties of humanity.

But, beside all general and ordinary considerations, my act was attended with aggravations that it is scarcely in human imagination to parallel. I destroyed, it may be, the two most lovely creatures then subsisting on earth. I did this with my eyes open, or at least with such information, and such perfect knowledge, as left me without the shadow of an excuse. The merits of William had been unfolded to me by lips that could not err. When his name was mentioned, when any chance circumstance

had brought him to the recollection of Margaret, in the course of our intimate familiarity, I could see reflected in her countenance the consciousness of his spotless purity, of that assemblage of virtues and admirable dispositions, which through life had won for him all hearts. In what language was it that Margaret had talked to me of her former lover? With few words. She felt that it would not be graceful in her to enlarge to me on such a subject. She felt that it would not become her, being now the wife of another, to let her mind loose to expatiate on his praises. But her words were such, of such significance, delivered with that deep and chastened accent, that spoke volumes. Once, and but once, upon an unexpected and irresistible occasion, she had broken out, and uttered largely what she felt respecting him, with superhuman eloquence. No: I had received such impressions and communications respecting him, that, if my mind had not been hardened in ill,

would have prompted me at once to reject all ambiguous appearances. I had the clue in my hand, that would have led me through the labyrinth, and like the sun have enabled me to penetrate every obscurity. To allow myself to be deceived even for a moment, after such preparation, was the worst of crimes.

Then I had invaded the sanctuary of his life in the presence of Margaret, in that sacred presence which had virtue enough to disarm a fiend. I had had no consideration for her unparalleled wrongs, for the unmerited destiny which had pursued her through life. She had once sacrificed the dearest affection of her heart, that in which her very existence was bound up, upon the altar of filial duty. When at length even her father relented, and agreed to call back her William from the shores of the St Lawrence, he perished, or appeared to perish, in her sight, a victim to the remorseless waves. It was

through the evidence of her deep feeling, her divine and hopeless resignation on that occasion, that she first won my heart. Yet to this being, so resigned, so exemplary, whom no misfortune ever spared, and who so fully and with so irresistible a grace discharged all her duties,—it was in her very presence that I had the barbarity to destroy the individual to whom her heart was consecrated, and by so doing bring upon her at once the most odious of imputations, and the last despair. So circumstanced, the mildest of human creatures broke out into bitter execrations against me, and her "flawed heart," overwhelmed with an agony too mighty to bear, burst at once. I had seen these two, the loveliest of human beings, whose attractions no mortal could withstand, stretched on the funeral bier, cut off in a moment by this cursed hand. No: never for an instant did I give retrospective entertainment to any palliation of my offence;

never did I regard it but as the most aggravated and atrocious crime that imagination itself could devise.

I did not therefore deceive myself, or suffer my better sense to be bewildered by the sophistries of Thornton. I knew that I had passed a bourne in morality from which there was no return, that I could never again lift up my head in innocence and honour, that I was separated from the pure in heart, and those that had suffered no stigma or foul reproach, by a wall that could never be surmounted. Yet were Thornton's consolations not without their effect. Severe as I was with myself, and inexorable in condemnation, I nevertheless experienced a sensible alleviation from the thought and the sight of a man who excused my errors with a clemency so unlooked for and so fascinating.

My interval of tranquillity was too short to be envied me, scarcely by the bitterest enemy of my crime. A servant of Thornton was sent

by his master to Harwich for some necessary affairs, and brought back a tale which involved me again in unspeakable alarm. He had seen in the port to which he was commissioned two strangers, the appearance of whom for some cause attracted his attention. They had come by an ordinary Dutch fishing-smack as passengers; but they did not seem to belong to the class of traders, who usually pass between Holland and the coast of Essex. They enquired particularly respecting a sort of bark, which had left Helvoetsluys in the preceding week, and which he knew by certain tokens to be his master's. They were curious to ascertain what persons it had brought over, and whether the gentleman to whom it appeared to belong was an inhabitant of the county. The manner of these strangers particularly excited the observation of Mr. Thornton's servant.

There are individuals, who seem never to be happy but when they are prying into other

persons' affairs. From the slightest indications, from a word dropped at hazard, from gestures, from winks, and nods, and smiles, they make out a connected story, adorned with a vast variety of circumstances. Sometimes they are grossly mistaken; and, though there be considerable acuteness and plausibility in their conjectures, yet, from miscalculation perhaps in one link of the chain, from laying undue stress upon an ambiguous indication, they get a thousand miles wide in their conclusions, and, while they think they are raising an edifice that no storm can shake, are in reality building a house of cards, story above story, which the first puff of an infant's breath lays level with the dust. And sometimes, on the contrary, they are surprisingly right, so that one wonders, working with so flimsy materials, by what kind of felicity they arrive at so sound and veritable conclusions.

One of this kind was Joseph, the servant of

my friend Thornton. He saw that I was a wanderer on the face of the earth, having no settled abode. He saw that there was something eminently unquiet about me, and believed that there was a perilous secret of some sort belonging to me, that would not allow me any room for tranquillity. He remarked the frequent consultations that took place between me and Catherine and his master, and was sure that they signified a great deal. He grew persuaded that I had done somewhat that rendered me dangerously amenable to the criminal law. Having got thus far, it is surprising how from half-words, and whispers that seemed to signify nothing, he proceeded from one thing to another, till he seized upon something very like the truth.

With this dangerous, and almost criminal curiosity, Joseph united a very kind and affectionate spirit. He loved his master with sincere affection, and, loving him, was sure to

extend the same good feelings and interest to every one whom his master particularly regarded. The proneness to curiosity which I have described, would in a malignant mind have betokened a person with whom it was dangerous to come into contact. Such a one having gained possession of a criminal secret, or of what appeared to be such, would never have rested till he had made an injurious use of it. He would have regarded himself as the delegate of heaven to bring down retribution upon crime. But the kindness of Joseph's disposition kept far from him a thought of this sort. On the contrary, the very circumstance of his having by his penetration wormed himself into a dangerous mystery, made him feel as if he were the protector, the guardian angel, of the person to whom it specially imported. His sagacity, by which alone he had arrived at the secret, inspired him with the idea that out of it grew a sort of kindred or relationship

between him and the unhappy party, so that he would as soon have thought of turning against his own flesh and blood, as against this person. On the contrary therefore Joseph held himself bound to do me every kind office, and by all the means in his power to shield me from mischief.

Actuated by these feelings, he had insensibly joined himself to the strangers upon the quay at Harwich. One of the persons toward whom they were directing their enquiries, pointed him out, as he foresaw they would, saying, There is a servant from Tendring House, who can give you the fullest information as to the matters you are speaking of. The strangers questioned him. He told them that there were indeed a gentleman and lady, father and daughter as he believed, who had come over from Helvoetsluys to Harwich with his master. They staid, he added, two days at our house, and then left it, to proceed, as he believed, for London, Mr.

Thornton having accommodated them with his own carriage as far as Colchester. The more respectable of the strangers, who appeared to be the master, asked Joseph a number of questions, particularly as to their ages, tending to identify the guests; and Joseph's answers appeared to be so ingenuous, and his communications attended with so little reserve, that he left the strangers apparently satisfied with his intelligence, and disposed to set out on their route, without troubling themselves with farther enquiries.

All this however was uncertain. There could be little doubt that the individual who sustained the principal part in the conversation with Mr. Thornton's servant, was Travers himself. He appeared, when Joseph parted with him, to be resolved to set out without delay on the road to London. Joseph loitered near them for a while; but he could not persist far in this, without giving them occasion to suspect

a sinister purpose, nor by consequence without weakening the credit they appeared to yield to his information. Might it not be therefore, that they shewed an inclination to proceed, only that they might the more completely throw him off his guard, and that, when they had got rid of him, they might approach nearer to the house, perhaps actually demand entrance, where Mr. Thornton's servant acknowledged the person they were in pursuit of had actually been, and whence they had no information but his, that he had certainly departed?

I was in consequence more astounded and distressed than relieved by Joseph's relation. I derived from it the unwelcome and unlooked-for intelligence that Travers had followed me to England. I was indebted, first to Joseph's curious and inquisitive spirit, and next to his activity in baffling my pursuer, that Travers perhaps at this moment was not at the door of the house to which I had resorted for refuge.

But this might be but a momentary reprieve. From hour to hour I might expect his arrival. Even if he went forward to Colchester, he might receive intelligence there, leading him to suspect the good faith of Joseph's relation, and inducing him to retrace his steps.

There was no appearance however for the present of these dreaded intruders, and every thing remained tranquil. Thornton thanked Joseph for his caution and promptitude in reply, and enjoined him not to mention to any servant in the house what he had observed, or the conduct he had adopted towards the strangers; and the fellow earnestly promised that he would be secret as death. Meanwhile it became necessary for me to bring my visit to Thornton to an abrupt conclusion. And, as it was probable that Travers had taken the direct road to the metropolis by Colchester and Chelmsford, I judged it prudent to follow a

circuitous route by Bedford and St. Albans, entering London by its north-eastern extremity, as I supposed him to have entered it directly from the east.

CHAPTER XVII.

My project, as I have said, in coming to London was, whenever it should be necessary, to turn the tables upon my pursuers, and to annoy them, instead of suffering myself to be annoyed by them. It had happened to me, in the mere exuberance of gaiety, when young, several times to have tried the flexibility of the lines of my countenance and of my organs of speech, in the way of imposing for a short time upon my familiar acquaintance, and causing them to mistake me for an entire stranger. I was endowed with considerable powers of mimicry, and could imitate with surprising accuracy the gait and carriage of another, so

that from the first I found myself in nearly all cases successful in these attempts. Having for as long as I thought proper deluded my companions, or even my superiors or my father, in this way, the jest was usually terminated by my abruptly throwing off my disguise; when the scene was wound up with a hearty laugh at the deception, accompanied with various compliments upon the adroitness with which I had kept up the artifice.

This had been merely the amusement of my boyish years. As long as the exuberance and jollity of youth remained, it supplied, and perhaps not ungracefully, an agreeable variety of sportfulness. But it was speedily dismissed, and presently was altogether forgotten. My character in maturer years, as has already sufficiently appeared, was altogether in a different vein. Sensibility was the predominant feature of my manhood, and this gave a more than common seriousness to the usual train of

my thoughts and my demeanour. It was bitter necessity only that at last brought back to my recollection the freaks, as I may say, of my childhood; and that, which I had never regarded but as "a ribband in the cap of youth," I now determined to have resort to, and to try the experiment at least, whether it might not be made to afford me "yeoman's service."

With the permission, and indeed at the suggestion of Thornton, I brought Joseph with me to the metropolis. His fidelity had been tried, and was above all suspicion; and his qualities, his prying curiosity, and his ingenuity in baffling pursuit, and putting the adversary on a wrong scent, might I conceived be of special service to me. He was not only qualified by his zeal to protect me; he could also, in case of need, carry the war into the enemy's territories. He was besides acquainted with the persons of both my pursuers; and

he had the happy faculty of instantly and infallibly recognising the person of any one whom he had once seen. His accomplishments therefore happily accorded with the project on which I had determined.

Accordingly one of the first commissions in which I employed him when I arrived in London, was to find out the residence and the haunts of Travers. Joseph could not well conjecture, why I should be so desirous of being acquainted with the abode of a man, as to whom it would be the greatest happiness to me, that he should be removed to the farthest extremity of the globe. He however cheerfully entered upon the function I prescribed him.

It was necessary to my safety and peace that my person should not only not be recognised by the two individuals who had vowed themselves to my destruction, but that I should be equally placed beyond the cognisance of the

numerous population of the metropolis. A coroner's inquest had pronounced a verdict of wilful murder against me. A proclamation had been issued offering five hundred pounds for my apprehension: and, in defiance of these dangers, I had now placed myself, as it were, upon the very barrel of gunpowder that was prepared to blow me into the air. Though, from the length of time that had elapsed since the alarm had been given against me, the recollection of my story and my crime had passed away from the memory of the majority, yet it must always be uncertain when and where the exception should occur; and that exception might in an instant effect my utter destruction. Beside which, there is at all times a body of persons in London, whose profession it is to trade in the blood of their fellow-men; and, if it were once whispered that I was within their reach, the whole of this body would be immediately set in motion to discover and to seize me.

I had therefore no sooner set myself down in the obscurest corner of the metropolis, than it obviously became incumbent upon me to provide the most impenetrable means of concealment that could be devised. I had of late worn a covering of false hair on my head, of the fashion which the manufacturers of such articles denominate *à la Brutus*. I now threw aside this covering, and cast a copious snow of hair-powder upon the stubble that was to be found under it, thus changing my black crown for a white one of an extraordinary and uncouth appearance. I placed a piece of a tobacco-pipe upon my gum so as to protrude itself like a deformed tooth, while my real teeth were by this contrivance completely concealed. The artificial tooth served beside to give a lisp to my pronunciation. With an extremely fine needleful of red thread I confined the end of my nose, so as to shorten that feature by nearly half an inch, and to give

it the figure that is called snub. I further placed a pad of two inches thick under my coat on each shoulder, which served wholly to change the appearance of my figure. I also buttoned the lapels of my coat up to my chin in a military fashion. By a voluntary act of the muscles I puffed out my cheeks, and opened my eyes to more than their natural dimension. All this may appear exceedingly frivolous and insignificant in the detail: but the effect was, as I instantly proved in the experiment, that my own daughter, who had now lived for months with me alone, did not know me. And, with certain artifices of speech, which I shall presently have occasion to explain, I carried on the deception for half an hour, and could have carried it on as much farther as I pleased.

Joseph was indefatigable in the errand I gave him of finding the abode of Travers, which in no long time he discovered in an hotel towards

the west end of the town. Travers would doubtless have consumed a much greater period in finding me, since I purposely fixed myself in an obscure quarter. He would however probably have encountered me at last, had it not been for the disguise that I now habitually assumed. Once assumed, I daringly exposed myself in places of public resort, secure that those persons who had known me best, would not recognise me under my present figure.

In the course of Joseph's enquiries he had met with some information respecting the elder branch of Travers's family, who were in very opulent circumstances, and constantly resided in England; and, according to his usual mode of proceeding, he put together the particulars he had gleaned, so as to compose from them a little history. When he had first told me of the hotel in which Travers was to be found, he next dropped a word relative to the information

concerning the elder branch of the family which had accidentally fallen in his way. It immediately occurred to me that I might make something of this story, to aid me in the project I had conceived to annoy and perplex my persecutor; and I therefore urged Joseph to detail to me all the particulars he had learned, and sent him out again, that he might add such farther knowledge as might be of use to me in the scheme I meditated. This was an employment particularly congenial to the constitution of my agent; and he in no long time brought me a volume of minute information that I might have recourse to in the execution of my project as I saw occasion.

Thus furnished with credentials, I boldly sought the presence of him, whom for more than twelve months I had above all the world avoided. The first person I encountered, when I went to enquire for Travers, was Ambrose, now his servant, and who had formerly been

mine. I could see that this young man felt some strange sensations at the extraordinary figure I made, but without the slightest suspicion of who it was that in reality stood before him. The character I assumed was that of an humourist, puffed up with the opulence of his means, who had lived almost wholly in the country, and had therefore little intercourse but with persons entirely dependent upon him, whom he overbore and dictated to as he pleased, and who felt obliged to accommodate themselves to all his unreasonableness and perverseness.

I was presently shewn in to the man I came to seek. I accosted him with an air of self-sufficiency and peremptoriness, and announced myself as the head of the house of Travers in England. I said that therefore, having heard of the arrival of my cousin, I had taken the earliest opportunity to call upon him, and offer him my protection. Travers, who felt all the

impetuousness and independent spirit of a West Indian, and did not understand that he was to be in a state of subordination to any one, was utterly confounded with the nature of my address. He several times attempted to assert his equality; but at every turn I cut him short, and begged that he would consider my great condescension in being willing to patronise him. My manner was that of a person totally unaccustomed to listen to more than three words from any lips but his own, and endowed with the highest degree of self-conceit and absurdity. At length Travers, tired out with my nonsense, civilly desired me to shorten my visit. At this intimation I pretended to take fire, and asked him if he considered who he spoke to, and that I was the senior member of the house from which he sprang. Having evaporated however the first suggestions of my rage, I assumed something of a milder tone, and expressed my forgiveness

of his error in pity to the want of breeding incident to the habits of a West-Indian planter. Travers, though extremely provoked, did not fail mean while to be somewhat amused with the apparent singularity of my notions and character, the like of which it had never been his fortune to encounter before.

I left him in a state of mixed sensations. It was no longer doubtful that I had thoroughly succeeded in the deception I had determined to put in practice. But this appeared only a precarious and temporary resource. And it may easily be imagined in what frame of soul, with a mind broken down with sorrows, with my prospects in the world thoroughly blasted, and having the worm of never-dying remorse for ever gnawing within me, I could pursue this mummery of personating a feigned character, and pouring out a stream of nonsense, which might answer very well in a comedy, and where the scene was kept up for amuse-

ment only, but which was little suited to the seriousness of life, and least of all to the temper of a man beaten down by the storms of adversity.

Meanwhile I felt myself compelled to persist. I called upon Travers again, and annoyed him with a no less copious stream of absurdity, the particulars of which it is unnecessary for me to repeat. I met him on another occasion in the street. Coming on him in this manner at a time when I least expected it, I felt at first that twinge which was to be looked for, at the presence of the person in all the world the most able, and the most disposed, to inflict upon me fatal mischief. Speedily however I recovered, and accosted him with the old topics, and in the same inexhaustible vein of supreme self-importance and condescending patronage. Travers began to think that he should be for ever haunted with this ineffable impertinence.

Having thus far convinced myself of my

capacity for successful personation, my mind ran on different disguises in which I did not doubt to be equally fortunate. But I felt that this would be too dangerous an experiment. Persuaded as I was that I could play characters very dissimilar to each other in equal perfection, I yet suspected that a mind, so acute as I understood that of Travers to be, would remark among them all a single vein, a similarity of artifice, that would suggest a suspicion, which, once set a-going, might set fire to a train, and blow all my fine-spun contrivances in the air. This sort of personating a variety of characters, in the full execution of which I felt convinced that the chances would be an hundred to one in my favour, might be excellent for sport, and when to be detected or not would be a slight question. But it was far another sort of consideration, where the trick to be played was not an affair of amusement, but for life, and where, so to speak, the performer

exhibited with a halter about his neck, which one false step that he made would tighten round the organ of respiration, and so put an end to his vagaries and his hopes for ever.

If success in the execution of my project could be a source of congratulation, I had now sufficient reason to congratulate myself. I had apparently cut off all clue to my persecutors, by metamorphosing myself into a totally different sort of person from that which I had been. It was as if Deloraine, the husband of Margaret, the assassin of William, the man most criminally responsible for the untimely deaths of his wife's father and mother, were dead and buried. He was no longer a subject of question; he was no where to be found. I retained indeed a consciousness of identity with this person. I knew that I was the true author of these tragedies. But I possessed this consciousness to myself. There was but one other individual in the world that was acquainted with

my secret; and in that individual I could place no less confidence that she would not hurt a hair of my head, than in myself.

I was then, as a superficial observer would say, unequivocally victorious and triumphant. But I did not feel it to be so. At what price was I triumphant? At the price of putting off my nature, and banishing every genuine impulse of my soul. I might think freely indeed (a mighty and expansive privilege!) when I was shut up alone in my closet. I might spread out my arms, use the gestures which my constitution of mind and my habits prompted, and employ the faculty of speech with unstudied phraseology and intonations. There was besides one other person, with whom I might be myself, and move and speak and express my thoughts, even as my own heart prompted me to do. Thus it was in the sequestered seat of my lodging, and with no one but my daughter to witness what I did. In this estimate I do

not count Joseph, because, though I ever found him faithful, and though he was of immense service to me, yet after all, he was only a servant, he had but just now become known to me, and that at first by a sort of accident. I was not familiarised to him; and even had it been otherwise, what sort of unbending of spirit and opening of soul could I hope for or expect with a person of his narrow education, and limited stock of ideas, and whose principal accomplishment lay in cunning, contrivance and subtlety?

The moment I opened my door, all this was at an end. When I presented myself to the view of my fellow-creatures, my situation was no more eligible, than that of a man who should have been bound hand and foot, and in that condition subjected to their examination. I could not move an articulation of my body but in correspondence to a preconcerted system. I was like a puppet, all of whose motions are

regulated by the wires, the string of which is held by the conductor of the shew. No person who has not had experience of the situation in which I was placed, can imagine its insufferable annoyances. The essence of the nature of man lies in the spontaneous obedience of his limbs and his organs to the genuine impulse of his mind. We move as free as air. Our thoughts wander to the farthest corners of the earth; and our language, and our gestures, and the expression of our features, hold an exact correspondence with the march of our thoughts. But to act a part the most in opposition to the true vein of our souls, and for that part never to have an end, is intolerable beyond the power of words to express. To have a watch upon all our motions and upon every expression, and to conform them to an artificial rule, is the worst of slaveries.

To be subject to all this was surely an abundant calamity. And it was rendered the more

bitter by the consideration of the penalty annexed to the smallest failure. If I did not draw the cloak of concealment on all sides close about my person, if the slightest indication betrayed itself that I was not what I pretended to be, it was all over with me. I was like the ass in Æsop's Fables, who disguised himself in the skin of a lion. At first he was triumphant, and terrified all the beasts of the forest into flight. But the moment a suspicion intruded that he was not what he appeared to be, a total reverse of fortune was at hand. If I relaxed my attention for an instant, if any incongruity was found in the part I attempted to play, shame and defeat would be close at my heels. I should be detected and exposed. Multitudes, by means of the proffered reward, were armed against me. I should be dragged to chains and to prison; and the very disguise I had assumed would be used as an argument of my guilt, and would

double the confusion and disgrace that would overwhelm me.

To all this must be added the peculiar circumstances under which a man playing a part must be perceived to stand. It requires a certain gaiety, an elevation of spirits and a determination of mind, to go through a borrowed part. In the sort of character I assumed, a species of swagger was necessary, a boldness that should overbear opposition, an air of triumphant conceit and self-sufficiency. How was all this to be made compatible with my broken heart, my blasted name, my ruined fortunes, my pitiless exile, and my prospect, in case of the slightest miscarriage, of a public execution, pursued with the curses and imprecations of my kind? No; I bore every where about with me a deep and a mortal wound. I did justice to all the guilt I had contracted, and hated the memory of myself and my action. It was impossible there-

fore that I should long, and still less continuously, personate feelings and habits that were foreign to my own. The malice of the most ingenious tyrant could not invent a punishment so terrible.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Besieged by these reflections, and exhausted with the successive efforts I had made in sustaining my artificial character, I came home one day to my lodging and to Catherine in a state of the most fearful desperation. I had passed through a series of agonies, each one more insupportable than the agony that had gone before; but this last finished the business. I shut the door of our apartment, and turned the key in the lock. I disentangled myself with impatience from the different articles of my disguise. This was quickly effected. I seated myself in my chair, and made Catherine sit in front of me. The poor girl saw that a

more than human thought was working within me; and she trembled. She was accustomed to witness the horrors of my spirit amidst the ceaseless trials that beset me; but, after all she had seen, her soul confessed something more terrible in the present situation.

Catherine, I said, I have come to an unalterable determination. I have gone through enough; I have tried experiments more than enough. I have fled from city to city, and from country to country. I have hid myself in places solitary, almost inaccessible. I have watched by day; sleep by night has fled from my eyes. I have seen in every bush an adversary; every sound has penetrated my soul, as if it were the harbinger of a final conflict. To all things there is a limit. What is the value of life on these conditions? At best existence is but a questionable gift. Many men have found it an insupportable load, even though surrounded apparently with blessings. They

have discovered in it a tediousness and a secret agony, when fortune seemed most to smile upon them. And shall I hesitate to throw off the load?

I have borne it for you, my Catherine, when otherwise I would surely long ago have given up the contest, and delivered myself to my enemies. But even generosity and self-denial have their limits; and I can endure the contention no longer. For your sake I have submitted to this last experiment. I have returned to my country; I have endeavoured to turn the tables on my adversaries; I have undertaken to disguise my person, my carriage, my modes of speaking, and my language, with the most consummate art. I have succeeded; and success has been to me the most insupportable misfortune. Oh, how I long for the time when I shall no longer have a part to play, a feigned character to sustain! How I long for the time when hope and fear shall be no more, and I shall

know the worst at once! Despair seems to me the most enviable of blessings. I will hug it to my heart, and be at rest.

I have chosen my part therefore, and have only to intreat that you will give way to me, and not oppose. I will not allow to my adversaries the glory of surprising and capturing me. I will triumph to the last. I will surrender; but, in surrendering, I will shew that I surrender only because I please. I will replace the articles of my disguise for the last time. I will present myself to the proper magistrate; and removing one by one before him these shreds and fripperies of concealment, will shew myself as I am, and tell him who I am.

I could not reconcile myself to the taking this last and decisive step, without fairly apprising you of my intention. I owe you more than ever one human creature owed to another. Your faithful attendance on me through all my calamities, your bearing with my terrors and my

impatience, your surrender of all the charms and allurements that the world held out to tempt you, and becoming the most wretched of fugitives for my sake, constitute an accumulation of merits, which, if ever the story could be told to future ages, the world would agree to regard as the most incredible of fictions.

I know that the purpose which I now announce will sound terrible in your ears. You will have much to go through. Would to God I could relieve you from the impending distress! But I cannot. I have committed the crime, and must sustain the punishment. It is your miserable fate to be my daughter, and you must submit to it. All I can recommend is, that you should arm yourself with patience.

The determination to which I have come, may seem to bear on you with particular hardship. But, carefully weighed, and compared with any other plan I could adopt, it is the mildest and most beneficent. I take from you an insupport-

able burthen. I remove a black and pestilential atmosphere, that suffocates your energies, that poisons your enjoyments, and that will render every day, so long as I live, hopeless and odious to you. You must pass through a severe trial; but it will be short. You will become self-centred and independent. You will be valued every day for yourself, and I shall be more and more forgotten. Men will at first remember that you had a dishonourable father; but that will by sensible degrees pass out of their minds. Your excellence and your virtues, which will shine the more, the less there is of an antagonist cloud to obscure them, will engage all men's attention, and put every thing of a contrary nature into speedy oblivion. Even my fatal error, which had nothing in it of what is base, sordid, or of deep and engrained malignity, will be in some degree excused, when I shall have suffered the penalty, and passed off the stage; and men will drop a tear of pity for the cruelty

of my fate, however they do not fail to regard me with horror so long as I live.

Of one thing more it is necessary to speak, though I know that to the loftiness and generosity of your spirit it will be painful to hear. Your father will be blotted from the roll of living beings: the sooner my name is consigned to everlasting oblivion the better. I can easily believe that your truly filial spirit will never allow you entirely to forget me. But, when you shall see me no more, when you shall know that this heart has ceased to beat, and that this form has become as a clod of the valley, an insupportable weight will be taken from your bosom. I shall be no more. But my lands and my income will remain. The inexorable determinations of the law ordain, that the entire property of a convicted felon shall escheat to the crown. But there is a recognised and established remedy for that. It is practicable, at any time before conviction, to make over

property in chief to another. And that shall be seen to. Though your father shall forfeit his life to the laws of his country, you shall never become a beggar. I will go this instant, and concert with my solicitor on that point.

I thus disburthened my spirit with an energy and eloquence that would not be restrained; and Catherine sat with mute astonishment, and listened to me. But, though she did not interrupt me with an articulate sound, it was plain that she passed through a series of unspeakable emotions. She clenched her hands, and strung with semivoluntary energy every fibre of her frame. At one moment she pressed her lips together with resolution and firmness; and at another they were convulsed with agony. She fixed her eyes upon me anon with inexpressible wonder; and anon the big tears rolled unheeded over cheeks of more than mortal paleness. I ended; and she spoke.

Oh, my father, she said, did I ever think it

would come to this? I have borne for you, as you say, more perhaps than ever daughter bore for a father. But in all there was hope. I endured, because I looked for a reward. I struggled, because I anticipated a victory, or at least an escape from peril, imminent and instant. Uncertainty was the cordial that supported my spirits; and, as long as there was uncertainty, I obstinately believed in good. It was for a father I exerted myself; and what would I not have done for such a father? My energies were more than mortal; I was omnipotent; nothing could subdue my strength; nothing could extinguish my perseverance.

And now you come to tell me, that all this is over, and that you will voluntarily put a close on the scene in the most tragical manner. Have you the heart to do it?

And with this announcement of your purpose you coldly tell me, that all this will ultimately work for my benefit, that, when you have pe-

rished, and so perished, I shall be happy, shall recover my cheerfulness and equanimity, shall become an ornament to society, be hailed with the esteem and cordial good wishes of all, and be placed in a scene of the most enviable prosperity.

I tell you, sir, that I shall never pass the line, which, once passed, is to confer all this happiness. It is very well to talk this. But to see the triumph of your enemies, to see you dragged to prison and to judgment, to count the hours that you shall pass in your lonely cell, to hear that you are brought out before the eyes of multitudes for trial and execution—No; I thank my God, I shall never witness all this; death will have laid his grasp on me long before. I could have exerted myself for you for ever; but passively to behold the worst, of this I am incapable.

Why did I devote myself for you, why did I count all I could do for you as nothing, and re-

garded conflict and misery as my supreme felicity, but because I lived in your life? I esteemed you as my only good: to know that you were safe, to hope that all would be well with you, was every thing I asked. We were inseparable; and the deed that separates us will to me at least be mortal. The only thing on which I valued myself, and for which I lived, ever since the moment when I became acquainted with your fatal encounter, was my vigilance and my exertions for safety; and, those concluded, my business in this mortal scene is over; that moment I die. I could live transportedly to know that you had escaped from every danger; but to be convinced that all our efforts are concluded in disappointment, I cannot.

And yet, my father, I do not seek to change your resolution. I do not wish you to do any thing for my sake, if you find the condition under which you live too bitter to be longer

endured. I ask of you one thing, a small thing, and that I feel you will not deny me. Grant me only till this time to-morrow. Suspend the execution of your purpose for so long. Do not ask me what it is I will do. For that time grant me your unlimited confidence. I think I have done enough to merit this concession.

Much as I had witnessed of the excellences of Catherine, I own she astonished me now. I yielded. How could I do otherwise? I, who had endured for so long a time, might well endure for this additional period. It was indeed a critical moment for my daughter. I anticipated that she would not give way to a vulgar and common-place weakness. I believed that she would display a real greatness on the occasion; but in what kind I knew not.

Catherine attired herself gracefully in a garb of sober grey. Her garments were all of one colour, and fell in folds to her feet. Her headdress was also of grey, and descended nearly to

her eyes. Her appearance was such as that of an order of nuns, of whom that should be the appropriate costume. She dispatched Joseph to procure her a carriage that might have an air of neatness and gentility, and directed him to mount behind it. She took her leave of me with an air of the deepest melancholy, yet at the same time marked with sedateness and inflexible resolution at parting. She pressed me to her bosom, and said, Remember, and expect me with patience! I shall very likely be back in two or three hours: in case of necessity I have demanded twenty-four, and you have granted them. She ordered the carriage to drive through the principal streets towards St. James's.

I was astounded at all she did. It was dark and inexplicable, like the prompting of insanity. Yet she proceeded with a style of firmness, and bespeaking clear conception, that awed me. It was as if an impenetrable veil

was spread between me and the approaching future, which I could not, and which I wanted the boldness to endeavour to look through. But, though I felt awed, I was nevertheless destitute of hope: and no sooner had Catherine left me, than I called up in order the steps I had announced my determination to take, and the results to which they might be expected to lead.

I revolved with horror and commiseration all that Catherine had told me—that it was impossible for her to survive the execution of my purpose. I knew that she was not a person to say this lightly, or to utter an empty threat for the mere purpose of deterring me from what I meditated. Yet I entertained a hope that the issue would not be thus tragical. I harboured a faith in the strength and elasticity of youth, to recover from what seemed to be desperate, to clothe itself afresh with the sinews of energy, and to break out, even like the glo-

rious sun after the blackest tempest and the most tremendous storm.

But, be that as it would, this was a part of my miserable fate, from which there was no escaping. I had intended only the death of William, if I could even be said to have intended that: but what I did, inevitably involved the premature destruction of my wife and of her parents. And it might be, that I should indeed occasion a broken heart to my only offspring, to the person whom I now singly valued in all the world. What could I do? It did not depend upon myself. If by any effort of mine I could have instantly dispelled the fate that hung over me, would it not have inspired into me the happiness of Gods to do it? But I could not struggle on for ever without hope of an end. I must cut the Gordian knot at once. And even, considering the question only as related to my daughter, would it not be better that she should die at once (if die she

must) in the full prime of her youth, than that she should go on without end, through a series of perpetual privations and ever-new alarms, cut off from all society and comfort, and with no associate but her broken-hearted and guilt-blasted father ?

CHAPTER XIX.

I WILL relate every thing, not in the order in which I learned it, but in that in which it actually passed. Catherine had gone but a few streets, when she stopped the carriage, and told Joseph of her purpose, which was to seek the presence of Travers. She met Ambrose at the door of the hotel, who of course instantly knew her. She directed him without delay to lead her to his master. There was that in her manner, which left him no choice but of implicit obedience. She approached Travers with firmness. He was awed, almost fascinated with her appearance, and felt at once that the beautiful, the almost superhuman figure that

approached him, was come on no trivial errand. She shut the door; and Travers and she were alone.

I am the daughter of Deloraine, she said, of the man to whom you have vowed immortal hatred, and whom for many months you have hunted, with the determination to bring upon him the death of a murderer. You have given yourself up to this single pursuit. You have thought that you had no other business or design in life, till the vengeance for the unmerited fate of your friend had been completely executed.

I have come to you with the full knowledge of this, with the perfect consciousness that you feel your resolution to be as unremovable as the pillars of the creation. Yet I have come with the persuasion that you are a man, accessible to human feelings, the pleas of justice, and that you have bowels of clemency and mercy. It is scarcely a feminine office that I

have undertaken; but, urged by the holiest of earthly duties, and strong in the principles of eternal truth, I have not hesitated. Why I undertook this no sooner, I can scarcely tell. It is only circumstances of irresistible energy, that call up all the springs of the human mind, and cause us to see things apart from the hazy atmosphere which is the ordinary dwelling-place of mortals, and in the transparency that is the prerogative of a divine nature.

What is it my father has done? He married a woman, whom he and every one believed to have been freed by death from all former ties. He entered with her into the most sacred of human bonds; that from which all the other relations of society take their source. He found her poor; he was himself rich. He took her according to God's ordinance, "to love and to cherish, till death should divide them." He engaged himself to her in conjugal duty; he "endowed her with his worldly possessions."

Margaret appeared the most amiable and faultless of women. She amply discharged the offices of her station; she seemed to live only that she might anticipate his desires, and watch for his comfort.

Then came the trial. The grave, so to express myself, opened, and yielded up its dead. No one perhaps was to be blamed in this. William had been seen by several apparently to perish in the tempestuous sea. No one suspected, imagined, that he had survived this catastrophe. If he had, would he not have been heard of? Not days and months only, but year after year had elapsed, and all was deep and unbroken silence.

This however was fallacious: William lived. If death had in it no certainty, if those who perished could rise again, "with twenty mortal murders on their crowns," what havock would this make in the scene of human life! It is no matter how loved, how valued once, were

those who have ceased to live,—with what deep sorrow, and heart-breaking lamentation, their loss was deplored; it is the condition of human life, that the place that knew them should know them no more. It is the condition of human life, that its connections and affairs, its changes and succession of property, its contracts and engagements, should go on in never interrupted succession. And, if the dead that were once most loved, could repass the boundary that separates them from the living, there would no longer be room for them found in the community of mankind.

Well: this event, which in the usual train of human affairs happens to none, happened to my father. From the hour that he received the astounding intelligence that William lived, all happiness, all tranquillity was at an end with him. He was to keep this, once much desired, now baleful and peace-destroying intelligence from his wife, not for his own sake

only, but for hers: for what would she become with this double claim upon her, on the one side consecrated with all the ceremonies that mankind in their care for the general welfare have invented, on the other with the endearments of a first love, and the fondness that no subsequent occurrences and fortunes could obliterate? All happiness and tranquillity were at an end with my father. Every rising and setting sun might bring the news that should baffle his wisest precautions.

After the compulsory absence of a day and a night Deloraine returned to his own habitation. The first spectacle that presented itself to his sight, was William and Margaret seated together on the turf on the outside of the wall of his garden. Here then was an end at once to that secret to which he looked for salvation. But it was worse than this. Their attitudes, the disposition of every part of the body, shewed, that affection, a mutual, entire melting

of souls, occupied them. What had passed in the short interval of Deloraine's absence to account for what he saw, he knew not. What mattered what had passed? What he saw was enough. He leaped from his carriage; he had pistols at hand; he lodged a bullet in the heart of the intruder. This was the extent of his offending. He had meditated no act of violence before; he harboured, he perpetrated no malice after.

I know how the law construes all this. It scorns to take account of previous circumstances, of any of the strings that twine themselves round the human heart. It comes with its scales, and weighs every thing to the partition of a hair. It comes with its measures, and takes account of roods, and yards, and inches of space, and reckons hours, and quarters of an hour, and minutes, and seconds of time. And it finds in the present case the required sum of space and time, and pronounces

a crime of malice prepense, and a verdict of wilful murder. It hurries the actor therefore to an ignominious death.—But I speak to a man, who has not by long poring on precedents and cases purged himself of all sentiments of humanity, to a West Indian, who has quick pulses beating in his heart, a "soul made of fire, an offspring of the sun."

I know how hard was the case of William, how infinite his sufferings, how unparalleled his merits. I know the perfect friendship that subsisted between you and him, and the grounds of that friendship. I do not wonder at the sharpness with which you felt his destruction, or at the eagerness with which you pursued its revenge. But William suffers no more. He is happy in this, that he is cut off from the evil to come. He has no consciousness of your revenge; and, if he had, such was the placidness and philanthropy of his nature, he would have no pleasure in it. The dead, Wil-

liam, Margaret, and her parents, are all dead. "There is no work, nor device, nor wisdom, nor knowledge in the grave." Its tenants are unconscious of all that we do, and reap no benefit from any thing we may achieve.

Suffer me then, thou true friend, inspired with so deep a feeling of injuries and benefits, to call off thy attention from them, and to turn it on the persons who live, and who are largely capable of joy and of agony. Deloraine, however unfortunate in the offence he has committed, has not deserved the retribution you seek. He has no felonious qualities. He is neither profligate nor malicious. Though he shed the blood of William, he did not imbrue his hands in guilt. He has contracted no moral defilement. He could not fail to be sufficiently unhappy in the memory of the wide-spreading and tragical consequences of the act into which he was hurried. What necessity was there, that you should hunt him from place to place

and from country to country? Why should you ever have degraded your noble and generous nature by the vilest of all offices, that of a hunter of human blood? Oh, my father, can it be, that without profligacy and without malice, you were destined to disgrace the illustrious line of your ancestors by a death that is only due to the vilest of malefactors? Oh, let us not always expend our cares upon the impassive and unconscious dead; but let us learn to feel also for those that live, that live through every line and fibre of their frames, whose sinews may be stretched with agony, whose souls may be torn with tormenting visions, who may count the minutes of nights bitter and sleepless, and suffer things that no words can adequately describe! What are we, that we should studiously engage ourselves in the infliction of misery, and derive a chosen delight from the perpetration of mortal agonies?

Of myself I will not speak. I at least am innocent. You have not in all your resentment imputed blame to me. Yet I am to have my full share of suffering. I have devoted myself for my father. Could I act otherwise? Should I not have been unworthy the name of a daughter, if I had not resolved to do all in my power to alleviate his calamities? But I have had, and shall have an ample portion in the sufferings you are so earnest to inflict. My youth, my innocence will be no protection to me. And now I have left my father with a protestation that, if he dies, I will not, cannot survive. Worn out with sorrows and persecution, he has this morning come to the resolve, that he will put an end to his griefs, and surrender himself to the law. I have therefore just left him, that I first might try whether you are made of penetrable stuff, and whether the truth, poured from the soul of one who stands on the brink of perdition, will move you. I

and my father abide your answer. Our life or death is suspended on your will.

Travers was melted with the fervent expostulation of Catherine. Could it be otherwise? She stood before him in all the radiance of youth and beauty. Her gestures and her speech displayed the utmost refinement of sense and education. She came instinct with the holiest of causes, that of a father; pleading for his existence, to preserve him from a death, not less unmerited in her conception, than ignominious. Every syllable she uttered was pregnant with truth, with virtue and conviction. There is much also in an enlightened confidence. Catherine felt that she could not be repelled, and that she would succeed. She poured forth with impetuosity the stream of divine eloquence; and it was not in mortal to interrupt her.

Travers saw truth in her own "shape how lovely." He saw; and every avenue of his

heart opened to receive it; and benevolence and philanthropy rushed in at once with a resistless tide. Travers had originally been good. Gaiety of heart had been his first characteristic; and that gaiety had spent itself in love, in perpetual acts of kindness, and charitable impulses in favour of every thing that lived. This goodness of his nature had been temporarily suspended. The unmerited misfortunes of his father, and his own disappointment in love, had spread a cloud over the sunshine of his soul, and darkened the atmosphere of his thoughts. More recently the shock he had received from the unanticipated destruction of his chosen friend, had soured his temper, and filled him "top-full of dire" revenge. But the voice of an angel in the shape of my Catherine suddenly restored him. And then he wondered at himself, that he should ever have been transformed into a demon, and have degraded his generous nature

by meditations of injury, and the devoting his days and nights to the unworthy object of hunting a fellow-creature to destruction. From henceforth he became all that was most honourable in a man; and I could record an hundred instances, if that were to the purpose of my story, of his unheard-of beneficence, and his coming like an angel from heaven to scatter blessings around him. His life resembled that of the Roman emperor who counted every day as lost, that was not marked with some good deed, and did not rescue some human creature from misfortune.

I prepared to meet Catherine, when she returned from her short absence, with solemn and mournful anticipations. What was the purpose that she had had in view, was a mystery to me. I yielded, for I could not avoid yielding, to her request for a brief suspension of my design. But I was without hope. After a grave deliberation on the position in which I

stood, I determined to surrender myself. I regarded therefore the scene of my mortal existence as closed. The forms were still to be passed through: my appearance before a magistrate, my examination, my being committed for a due season to prison, my trial. I could well have dispensed with these; and have proceeded at once to the last, degrading, agonising scene, with which a culprit, condemned by the law, terminates his mortal existence.

Meanwhile I was not a little surprised at the speed of the return of Catherine. The steps with which she hastened from the carriage, and ascended the staircase, were not those of a person laden with fatal tidings. She ran; she flew; she threw herself into my arms. She sobbed on my bosom. But her sobs, though they testified the perturbation of her mind, were not those of an overwhelming grief, but spoke of gratulation and joy.

My father, she said, as soon as she recover-

ed the faculty of articulate speech, you are free. Travers is our friend. I have seen him; and he dismisses all thought of annoying you. Oh, why have not human creatures a confidence in the force of truth and justice? Why do they not believe that there is a power in these, which, addressed to an ingenuous spirit, cannot fail to overcome every obstacle? You are free. No more of uneasiness; no more of frightful apprehension and terror. We shall enjoy each other's society, and communicate our thoughts and our feelings once more, without fear of interruption. One day of peace and security shall succeed to another, till at length, if such is the will of Heaven, in a venerable age, overshadowed, and cut off from many of the sweetest pleasures of life, unambitious, but resigned, I shall close your eyes, and commit you to the tomb.

At length she related to me all that had passed in the interview upon which she had so

heroically determined. What were my sensations? After all her sacrifices and self-devotion for so long a time, this went infinitely beyond them. I had given life to this glorious being in the course of nature; but she, by boldness of enterprise, and generous energy of execution, had returned the benefit ten thousand fold. We withdrew to obscurity, but to harmony and love, satisfied with each other; Catherine with the consciousness of having stood the hardest trial, and discharged every duty, and I in the daily sight and the intercourse of the most exemplary of daughters.

Meanwhile my story is done. Travers conditioned that I should pass again to the continent. The proclamation of a reward of five hundred pounds was still out against me; and it was in the power of every needy and unprincipled wretch to inforce it, to bring me before the tribunal of the law, and to defeat all that had been effected for me by the heroic

interposition of my daughter. I knew that Thornton purposed to pass over again into Holland, and finally to settle himself on the estate which had descended to him in that country. Catherine and myself presently took our departure, and repaired to his house at Tendring. He was delighted to receive us. He had conceived the deepest interest in me from the time he had attended me for one month in the recovery from my typhus, and by his assiduities had so materially contributed to the restoration of my health. Between him and Catherine there rose a softer passion. He admired in her the invincible filial affection with which she had followed me in all my misfortunes and disgrace; and he adored her for the boldness of undertaking, and the more than human eloquence, with which she had finally subdued and disarmed my seemingly inveterate persecutor. They married. Catherine was the illustrious personage that gave

radiance to the scene of our domestic life; for we all lived together. But Thornton and myself felt no uneasiness at her superiority. We were satisfied that every thing was in its due order, and willingly submitted ourselves to her benignant sway. For myself I felt that my career was ended, and that I had nothing to do but to wait for the angel whose stroke was finally to relieve me from sublunary cares. I had suffered a grievous calamity in my second marriage and its issue. I was in obscurity and in exile; but I was calm, and equally free from the perturbations of both hope and fear.

CONCLUSION.

It remains for me to finish my tale. Catherine, the exemplary Catherine, vainly imagined that in freeing me from the terrors of legal retribution she would restore me to tranquillity. It was no such thing. Conscience is too true a monitor, to suffer her dictates to be baffled. I had done that, I had contracted such a guilt, as all the waters of the ocean could never wash away. In the actual experiment I think I may say, that my being driven from country to country, kept in a state of eternal alarm, and not knowing a moment that I could call my own, was a relief to me. It gave me occupation, and called on me for incessant activity.

Even when I put on the most studied disguise, when I moulded every motion of my body, and every intonation of my voice, to a feigned and unnatural strain, this still gave me something to do, and kept my attention on the stretch. I had now one unvaried holiday for anguish and remorse.

It was a bitter aggravation of my lot, that I had passed so great a portion of my life in innocence. I was like what has been fabled of the ermine, whose fair and snow-white fur is all its joy, and who, if one spot or discolouration comes upon it, pines away and dies. But with me it was not a spot. My hue, which had been fair "as monumental alabaster," was changed at once into the colour of blackest night. I had not gradually subsided into wickedness. One moment overwhelmed, and blasted me for ever; one instant's guilt had sunk me to the lowest pit of hell. For me there was no retreat nor return on my steps.

I had not meditated the crime I committed; the same instant saw it conceived and executed. But there it stood complete and finished to everlasting ages. William lay before me a corpse, slain by my hand. Margaret was lifeless, the consequence of my act. Of what avail were tears or repentance? Nothing could restore them. Generation after generation of mankind can never in my opinion produce their like, two beings so innocent, so guileless, so irresistibly lovely.

It may be said, that the hand of fate had passed over them, that they were reduced to a condition which no longer admitted of tranquillity and happiness. What mattered that? Small blame fell to the share of any in producing this unfortunate condition. But what right had I to obtrude my unhallowed violence? I should have left them in the hands of that inscrutable Power, which often disposes of things in a manner very wide of our expectations, and

often with lenient hand softens to us its apparently harsh decrees. They could scarcely have failed to be unfortunate. But the calamity that reaches us by no mortal hand, we are usually prepared to sustain with resignation. They might each of them have been useful, if not happy. They might each have been exemplary, —examples of edifying, unmurmuring resignation, examples of industrious benevolence, finding their own peace in the joy and contentment of others. But, if either, if Margaret herself, who might be considered as in some degree to blame, had died, yet most fortunate would it have been for me, if I with rash hand had not implicated myself in the catastrophe.

By cutting them off as I did, I subjected them, to the extent of my power, to unmerited obloquy. I displayed in the most unequivocal manner my own sense of their guilt. And mankind, who are ever rash and wholesale in their judgments, would likely enough say, He

must have been satisfied. He would never have rushed to so tragical a conclusion without unquestionable grounds. I therefore by one and the same act suddenly cut the thread of their lives, and darkened, to all that knew or that ever heard of them, their spotless and well-earned reputation.

"The tongue," says the apostle, "is a little member; but it defileth the whole body, setteth on fire the course of nature, and is itself set on fire of hell." And, if this may be said of the tongue, how much more of the hand? It is our single instrument of direct violence. It commits thefts, and every species of fraud. Every rash act in which we engage, is its especial province. It perpetrates indignities; it wounds; it maims. It commits murders, both upon the animal creation, for alleged necessity and for sport, and upon our fellow-men. It executes the bloody decrees of our criminal law. "From whence come wars and fightings among us?"

It mows down whole armies, and desolates mighty provinces. All the crimes and atrocities that blot the page of history are perpetrated by this single implement. Surely then it becomes us to set a watch upon its use, and deeply to reflect, before we put forth the magnitude of its power!

As I have said—As long as my mind was on the stretch, ever expecting the destroyer, apprehensive that every door that opened would prove the door of irretrievable fate, listening to every sound and believing it the harbinger of vengeance, my thoughts were beguiled. I had not leisure for the bitterest misery. But, now that my person is secure, and I no longer fear the ministers of human justice, my condition becomes infinitely worse. I have nothing to do, but to ruminate on what I have committed. I may fill my cup of remorse to the brim. I may temper it with a thousand deadly ingredients. And the more I revolve in my secret

soul the deed I have perpetrated, the blacker does it shew itself.

I am burnt up with a continual fever. Sleep has become a stranger to my lids. I loathe every species of refection. If I eat of animal food, I image the flesh of him I have murdered. If I drink, my cup appears mingled with blood. I think of myself as the most atrocious of offenders. I say to myself a thousand times, Never was guilt comparable to mine!—This cannot last long.

I am conscious that I am the worthy object of universal hate. Whoever looks upon me, and knows me for what I am, must turn from me with inexpressible loathing. Like the infatuated victims of superstition, when they see a raven or other bird of ill omen, so do those who meet me, prognosticate a thousand evils impending over them from the encounter. Those only who know me not, can look on me with serenity and indifference. Happy was I

when I could slink along unheeded, and those who saw me felt no occasion to lament over the misfortune that dogged their steps. Happy am I in unviolable solitude [No; not happy, inexpressibly miserable]; but, when a human creature starts up in my path, then I feel my curse, vast, all-embracing, crumbling and dissolving all the muscles of my frame.

Why then do I pen this history? Who can sympathise with me? Who can endure to peruse the tale? Yes, though I am odious, horrible even to the imagining, and past all redemption, yet the narrative has its atoning features. By some inscrutable ordination, though I am thus worthy of execration, the progress of my destiny has allied me to all that is excellent and illustrious in woman, to Emilia, to Margaret, to Catherine, each perfectly distinct in her qualities, yet jointly and successively exhibiting whatever is most precious, and admirable, and life-giving in human

nature. Let then the reader forget, and abjure all sympathy with me; but let him value my tale for their sakes. No other story ever presented such a constellation of virtues.

The reader may also collect one invaluable moral from my history. My offence, though clothed with every possible aggravation, was but the offence of an instant. In all that went before, and all that followed, I was guiltless. What a momentous deposit therefore, and committed to how frail a custody, is human life! There is scarcely an instant that passes over our heads, that may not have its freight of infamy. How ought we to watch over our thoughts, that we may not so much as imagine any enormity! How exactly regulated and nicely balanced ought to be our meditations, that no provocation may take from us the mastery of ourselves, and hurry us headlong ten thousand fathoms beyond the level of a sound discretion! "Wherewith shall a man cleanse

his way" in the complicated encounters of our mortal state? By binding constancy and truth "as a sign upon our hands," and wearing them "as frontlets between our eyes."

I am now arrived at the last page of my scroll. I began it in the Netherlands. I continued it in the solitary and ruinous castle of the Rhine. It has constituted a sort of diversion to my anguish. Retrospect, though nearly allied to all I was then suffering, seemed to be the relief of an all-devouring monotony. I leave it behind me to be disposed of by my successors as they please. I do not forbid them to destroy it. If it never see the light, it will yet have served a temporary purpose to myself. Catherine has a child, a boy, beautiful, lovely, and of seraphic innocence. As long as she or her offspring see the light, these papers must never be divulged. I have changed the names indeed; but the story is too full of particulars, many of them well known, for it to

be possible that it should not be brought home. Yet, if Catherine and her husband so please, let this narrative be preserved! It may surely be kept in perfect security. And, such is the endless vicissitude of human things, a century, or even half a century may pass, and all things connected with my tale may be obliterated; and Deloraine, and the fatal name to which that appellation serves as a veil, may have perished from the memories of men; and this story may no more be a libel, than the records of Haroun Al Raschid, or the fortunes of Ahasuerus, Vashti and Haman.

THE END.

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